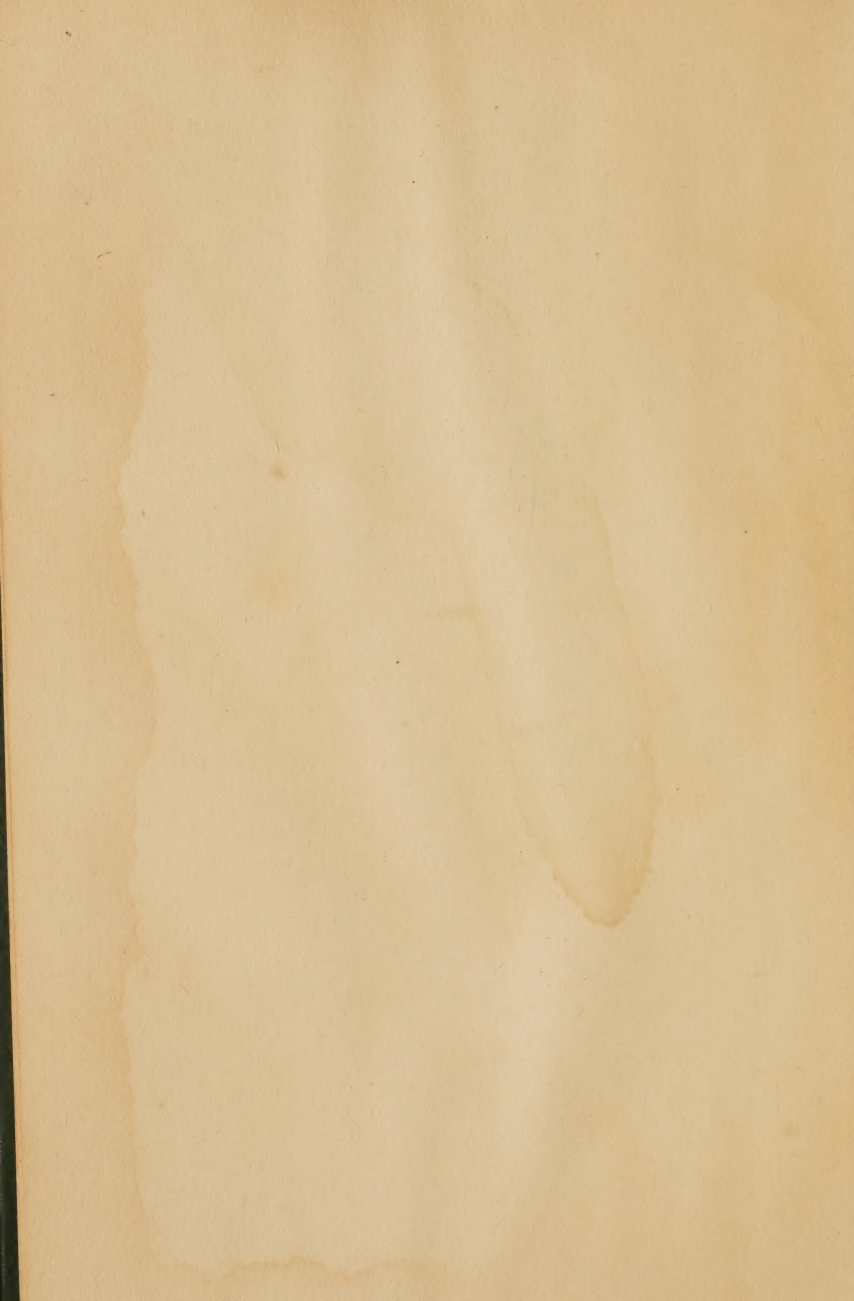


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The boy-savers' guide







THE BOY-SAVERS' GUIDE







THE AUTHOR'S FOUR





RED "CREDENTIALS"



# THE BOY-SAVERS' GUIDE

**Society Work for Lads in  
Their Teens**

BY  
REV. GEORGE E. QUIN, S.J.

*SECOND EDITION*

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**REMY LAFORT,**  
*Censor Librorum.*

**Imprimatur.**

**✠ JOHN M. FARLEY,**  
*Archbishop of New York.*

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## OUR HOLY FATHER'S APPRO- BATION

Following his gracious acceptance of  
"The Boy-Savers' Guide"

---

*Dilecto filio Religioso viro Georgio  
Quin d. J. ex omnino gratulante  
ac precorante, sancta quaeque a  
Dno approbante, Apostolicam Bene-  
dictionem peramanter impertimus.  
Die 31 Maii 1909.*

*Pius PP. X.*

## TRANSLATION

To our beloved son, George Quin, a Religious of the Society of Jesus, with heartfelt congratulations and with best wishes for God's blessing on his deserving work, we lovingly impart the Apostolic Benediction.

Pius PP. X.



## INTRODUCTION

### SECTION I—WHY THE WRITER HAS WRITTEN<sup>1</sup>

IT HAS been with the aim of furthering religion in those whose loyalty to the holy cause will do most toward stemming the rising tide of unbelief, anarchy, and immorality; for assuredly spiritual advancement is of its very highest efficacy in the directions just named when secured in our boys, destined to be heads of families and leaders in all departments of life.

And yet these arbiters of the future carry the seed of pretty much all the evil that is to be. Bless their innocent sisters, who stand so little in need of preservative care! Indeed, in godliness of life, the gentler half of our race could easily hold its own if only the sterner partner would cease playing the rôle of tempter. Take care of the boys, then, and the girls will take care of themselves. Nay, more; could but half of the obstreperous scamlings be made into anything like perfect men, feminine virtue, thereby obtaining fuller play, would almost repair the primeval lapse and restore the world to a paradise anew.

For all that, however, the weaker sex, when evilly led by the stronger, must in turn lose sight of God and His holy laws. Hence, if Catholicity (the only force able to cope with scepticism or with social and moral disorder) is to possess the energy

<sup>1</sup>This volume revises and completes what the author has presented on his subject in the booklets entitled, "The Boy-Savers' Series."

needful for coming battles, it must be preserved and strengthened in the hearts of American male youth. Here, finally, is a consideration calling loudly for action in favor of our boys, who, as a class, are exposed to the daily outgivings of unbelief and anarchy and can not reach early maturity without familiarity with the spectacle of vice enthroned.

Whatever pseudo-confidence may be opposed to this urgent call is no more than the feeble negative consolation of knowing that in our land faith and, consequently, social and moral order are less menaced than under certain other flags. To be sure throughout the United States we have not reached the plight of some foreign communities, where Catholic male adults are scarcely seen in church, save for their own or others' funerals; nevertheless, the forerunner of this deplorable status, the Catholic man utterly neglectful and indifferent regarding religious matters, is so common with us as to be met at every turn. Is this familiar spiritual monstrosity to multiply, or is he to become less in evidence on our soil?

We have here a momentous question; for accordingly as it will be answered, chaos for the present life and the next, or safety for the present life and that to come is in store. Obviously, the query could be given a more cheering response were each and every one of our parishes permanently provided with a thoroughgoing boys' organization; and it is in the hope of contributing to the creation of that reassuring answer—in the hope, therefore, of helping at least some parishes to maintain a saving juvenile movement—that the writer has assumed the present task.



## SECTION II—EXPEDIENTS TO CHOOSE FROM

However, warm interest in youth does not burden these pages with a dictatorial tone. They are written for the purpose of simply suggesting divers measures, all of them tested during years of personal experience, which it is hoped may be found helpful to practical friends of city boys.

And while a special form of first communion preparation, operative apart from fraternities, is presented at the close of this volume, the expedients to be offered are mainly in favor of societies; they, consequently, are proposed for use on our young friends as on an evasive, rather disorderly, and more or less wayward element to be gathered into organizations and, through the organizations, to be controlled and improved.

Indeed, as regards the first of the three foregoing departments of endeavor, it should be carefully noted that the rather numerous attractions of future chapters will be presented, not for simultaneous use, but for selections suited to circumstances. This limitation is emphasized by the fact that, while the author has some time or other plied every one of his drawing features, he has never dreamed of such a thing as employing them all conjointly. And still there is excellent reason for publishing in full the expedients that have proved of practical value; an excellent reason again for asking other organizers to do likewise.

Sadly enough, our apostolate, though of acknowledged importance, is commonly regarded askance, as if hedged round about with difficulties insuperable to all save such as are specially fitted

for the task by rare personal gifts. Here, truly, is a deplorable misconception, to be removed if possible; but the same were best removed if those who have actually rallied boys could only be induced to make common property of the plain, business-like methods through which they have achieved success. Such action would enforce the contention that rescue work is dependent mainly on systematic endeavor; and this while greatly encouraging new leaders by affording them a wider choice of ways and means.

Neither will those already in harness fail to profit by the consideration of the methods of others. In the present important affair, we must all remain painstaking inquirers and learners; for boys are like other high explosives: treated with care, they make ready to move the world; awkwardly handled, they wreck the workshop.

SECTION III—LADS IN THEIR TEENS TO BE CARED  
FOR. NO SPECIAL FORM OF SOCIETY  
RECOMMENDED

The devotion of the present undertaking solely to subjects in their teens appears in the undertaking's very title. On the one hand a conspicuous presentment of this limitation seems called for as emphasizing the writer's earnest objection to the admission of youngsters (apparently) twelve years of age or younger.

There is, furthermore, a second and still more important reason for making the limitation unmistakably clear; it is that in discussions on our subject the word "boys" is very frequently used to sig-

nify juveniles and adolescents of all ages, including even persons who have passed their majority. Now this ambiguous and hopelessly confusing acceptance of an all-important term is justly obviated by the permanent declaration that the "boys" of the present pages are really such, and are to be provided for according to the demands and facilities of their special time of life.

For, considered as material for pious societies, young fellows between thirteen and eighteen form a well-defined category of their own. In, for instance, the vital matters of susceptibility to available attractions and acceptance of the director's leadership, they by no means call for classification with young men, but are practically on the same footing with girls and can be organized along lines that would prove utterly impracticable with older youths.

Meanwhile I suggest no particular kind of society; only measures which it is hoped will be found applicable here and there to religious bodies in general. In fact, any idea of securing absolute unity of formation in juvenile associations must be replaced with a welcome to diversity of formation when we note that secondary but important aims should vary with local circumstances; and that even fraternities the same in name and general purpose ought to show differences resulting from the fact that each worker wisely manages by ways and means chosen to suit his own individual disposition and taste.

It is to be admitted, indeed, that the organizer is himself the very best constitution for his society and should boldly inscribe on its escutcheon the

autocratic motto, *l'état, c'est moi*. The feasibility of his so doing is made all the clearer by the abiding and openly displayed confidence of the young people concerned. These invariably ignore the title and special features of their society to name themselves after its director. People may call the members "sodalists," "Catholic cadets," or "total abstainers"; but the members, as persistently self-described, are simply "Father Such-a-one's boys," and to the end of the chapter their creed seems to be almost the Mohammedanlike declaration, "There is one God and Father Such-a-one is His Prophet."

Clearly, however, the diversities, in matters of detail, here anticipated do not by any means mar the unity of our societies in making for the one supreme object before them. In this apostolate it is literally true that all roads lead Romeward, since every variety of Catholic juvenile associations necessarily forms loving and zealous sons of Mother Church.

#### SECTION IV—PRIESTLY ENDEAVOR TO BE INDEPENDENT OF BOYS' CLUBS

As a matter of course my treatise on the care of parish boys is directed primarily to brother priests, and this with profound appreciation for the marvelously superior facilities given them by the grace and authority of their sacred calling, and by the implicit confidence of the faithful, whether old or young. Meanwhile, as will be kindly noted, clerical workers are asked to consider methods prescinding wholly from the permanent amusement center or club, the management of which under normal



circumstances they are strongly dissuaded from undertaking.

It is really most unfortunate that most sacerdotal would-be organizers accept as indispensable this institution which they rarely need and the direction of which offers special difficulty for themselves in particular. Indeed, in its present connection with priestly activity, the boys' club is something of a dog in the manger; itself can not well materialize, neither will it permit other forms of endeavor to appear. Further on, to be sure, attention is given to the ever-open rendezvous, but the pages so filled are addressed preferably to lay workers.

As is seen in the last remark, appreciation of the superlatively excellent opportunities afforded directors in Holy Orders does not at all blind one to the splendid results others have been accomplishing in the past and can multiply hereafter. Successful boy gatherers, acting under the direction of pastors, or at least harmoniously with them, are brothers of Religious communities, members of the St. Vincent de Paul Conferences, or zealous laymen laboring by themselves; and the author, after treating every nook and cranny of his subject, is confidently hopeful that all of these good workers as well as their more numerous hoped-for successors can be aided by what has been written.



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# THE BOY-SAVERS' GUIDE

## CHAPTER I

### AN EFFECTIVE AGENCY

#### SECTION I—WHAT OUR SCHOOLS CAN NOT DO

“How shall we care for our boys?” is by many, and doubtless with perfect justice, called “the burning question of the hour”; nevertheless, I submit that, while it burns and burns, there is comparatively little light. For proof, witness the fact that the warmest and most intelligent friends of the rising generation usually seek cure-alls exclusively in the Catholic school and the young men’s society. These two agencies, thus permitted to assume a well-meant practical monopoly of parochial endeavor in favor of youth, operate with much cost at the start and finish of the juvenile course, while between them multitudes of boys fall into the bottomless pit.

Interested persons often ask if religious education is not safeguard enough for American boys. One would almost imagine that such inquirers had just arrived from some Christian Utopia, penetrated by no knowledge of our matter-of-fact status in these United States. For the present, at least, how can sufficient saving efficacy be attributed to even the above rich source? As matters now stand, the majority of our Catholic lads never attend parochial schools at all. To Christian education we must offer the due meed of honor, together with active support and earnest wishes for its magnificent



further development; but let it meanwhile be remembered that in spiritual as in temporal life, juveniles who hunger can not be sustained by the food given those whose needs are supplied.

Moreover, Catholic schools, even were they in universal and perfect operation, could never forestall religious organizations. Such bodies will always be in demand for the task of safeguarding the school's former pupils, now become working boys and transferred from the peaceful, prayerful atmosphere of the class-room into the midst of industrial turmoil and moral trials. To be sure, early Christian training inspires in souls a warm piety that protects from the contagion of sin; this early training, however, is very far from making immunes. Too often, then, the well-disposed working lad, with money jingling in his pocket and passion burning in his heart, suffers spiritual ruin from lack of the encouragement and guidance which preserved him in school days and which, if at hand, would preserve him still.

We must, besides, bear in mind that, counteracted by a strong social drift toward materialism and immorality, early Catholic education on American soil accomplishes in multitudes of its beneficiaries practically nothing beyond the very important, but necessarily limited work of strengthening faith and of thus facilitating a full return to God in maturity, old age, or the hour of death. The above result, precious as it is, leaves ample field for the activity of societies having for their aim the formation of genuine Catholic manhood, by insuring to the still adolescent heart a warmth of religious spirit. Indeed, persons of experience

probably share the writer's belief that among even such of our unmarried men as have been trained in Catholic schools, alarming numbers are of doubtful regularity in attending Mass; must be coaxed for the Easter duty if they make it at all; profess little if any interest in parochial affairs, and are more or less disinclined to meet the priest.

If, then, our boys are to be succored universally and adequately in the heat of conflicts now waged against piety, morals, and faith it must be by Christian societies that follow youth beyond the classroom; it must be through the instrumentality of organizations that exert over the products of both parochial and public schools a saving, pious influence gratefully familiar to the former, and experienced far "better late than never" by lads of the less favored category.

## SECTION II—WHAT YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETIES CAN NOT DO

It may be safely asserted that of every one hundred generous souls moved to aid actively our toiling lads, seventy-five or more, in getting down to real work, miss their first object so badly as to labor chiefly, or even exclusively, for young men. Hence the scorching question, "how shall we help our boys?" is too often settled by a chilly conclusion not to help them at all.

This divorce of practice from its directive partner, theory, involves a lamentable indifference to the needs of the very period in male life when organized assistance can be of most service. It is during the teens, especially from fifteen to eighteen,

that all is really settled. They mark a crisis in which passion awakes, habits form, true or false bearings are taken for life's voyage, and the Church is accepted either as a ship for mere occasional passage at most, or as a permanent bark of safety.

The young men's society, enrolling only individuals of ways already determined by the above choice, exerts an influence that seems preservative, rather than curative or strengthening. Its chief function is the negative one of preventing youths already, as a matter of fact, devoted or faithful or vicious, from lapsing respectively into cold obedience, open misconduct, or total depravity; but radical improvement and the resolute adoption of high aims will hardly result from an organization that deals with the subject only after wage-money, complete personal liberty, and developed passion have fixed his choice of some definite life place on the moral scale. If any careless son of Adam is to be taken hopefully into the net of earnest Christianity and supererogation he must be caught not much later than the period of enduring his last pair of short pants.

### SECTION III—STERILE AND FERTILE SOILS CONTRASTED

Since, then, young men's societies would not be of ideal benefit even if potent to gather in all male individuals of eighteen or above, what efficiency can be associated with their present inability to acquire extensive membership at all? No doubt many of these bodies make something of a showing; nevertheless the great majority of parishes dare not

undertake them, and when established they rarely, if ever, enlist as many as twenty per cent. of the intended members before passing from a feeble boom into premature decline. These facts certainly weaken hope that, under present methods anyway, such unions will ever influence a very considerable number of our youth.

And if one whose judgment is certainly not at fault through want of familiarity with the subject may pause to account for this failure, let me attribute it even less to the ever-conspicuous and much-accused financial neglect, restlessness, and clique rivalry of adolescence than to certain more radical causes lying somewhat beneath the surface. First of all, young men already attained to maturity with no prolonged early training in Church societies are, as a class, strongly prejudiced against membership in them. Their juvenile choice of spiritual ways and means has fallen so far short of the highest as to permit an almost insurmountable repugnance to any departure that might seem pious.

To this must be added a fact that often escapes attention. Young men are, in reality, but feebly influenced by even very excellent arrays of natural attractions. Their indifference, of course, arises from no lack of appreciative regard for the sweets of life; it is due rather to the multiplicity of diversions which grown persons can always provide for themselves. What with private clubs and perennial politics, chumships and courtships, full control of earnings, etc., persons of the older class are amply self-sustaining in the matter of recreative occupation. To the dismay of inexperienced patrons they can easily afford to desert the well-equipped

parochial "rooms" or gymnasium, even after loud clamors for these advantages.

This independence, hardly realized beforehand by adults themselves, grows enormously strong when stimulated by the above-mentioned antipathy to new church affiliations. Hence, strange as it may seem, multitudes of Catholic young men who would freely respond should certain amusements be provided elsewhere, will studiously shun similar attractions when placed in religious surroundings.

Forced by these considerations to admit that senior associations, as they now stand, can not reach the rank and file of our young people, let us rejoice at the refreshingly contrasted popularity of the associations here advocated. Juniors, almost to a boy, become easy, willing captives to the methodical organizer. It is a noon-day fact of universal experience, that the young fellows, as yet comparatively innocent and nowise hostile to persons and things religious, crowd, with childlike simplicity and utter disregard for social or race distinctions, about attractions of trifling character.<sup>1</sup> Nearly all the lads in town are enthusiastically yours, when once word has spread through workshop, school-room, and alley, that the cherished field of every-day romp is the general rendezvous for a grand universal movement heavenwards.

<sup>1</sup>It is another blessed trait of boys in their teens that, at least for the doings of a popularly conducted society, they totally obliterate race lines. The writer, for example, is excusably proud of his own cosmopolitan and visibly Catholic family. Considered with reference to the parentage of its members, it is a composite of Americans, Irish, French, Germans, Poles, Italians, Hungarians, and Bohemians, all intermingling as peacefully and harmoniously as if the Tower of Babel had never been planned.



As the discerning reader has doubtless understood, this award of first honors to juvenile associations is not prompted by any lack of interest in unions established for the benefit of seniors. On the contrary, my ultimate purpose—the formation of true Catholic men—needs no repetition; and, since boy culture is here advocated only as a means toward that all-important end, our subject is not deserted, but more fully developed by some consideration of this further question.

#### SECTION IV—CAN SOCIETIES FOR MALE ADULTS AMBITION FUTURE BETTER STANDING?

If only some good angel were to furnish a process by which all workers would be endowed with abundant magnetism, the prospects of senior associations would, *ipso facto*, brighten immeasurably; for while the following chapters vehemently deny all need of personal drawing influence over boys, the writer cheerfully concedes that such influence is perhaps the only permanently efficacious and far-reaching attraction that can be offered to young men. However, the above inquiry concerning the future of organizations for the older class must be made with reference, not to ideal leaders, but to the actual friends of youth taken just as they really are and, therefore, possessed of no unusual innate charm.

With the question thus restricted, the answer is conditionally affirmative. The youthful adult masses can be fairly well gained to pious societies, provided a beginning be made with lads in their teens, while natural attractions are practically ir-

resistible and the momentous choice of a spiritual course is being made. The "young men question" of which we hear much is, therefore, merely a phase of the "boy question," of which we hear far less. Youngsters, easily gathered *en masse*, can be numerously molded into future life-subjects of senior associations; and the latter, thus fed from their natural reservoirs, will acquire a life and vigor not obtainable under present conditions.

It is by no means my intention, however, to present a roseate view of this matter. The young men's society, to secure permanent numbers in this way, must gain them slowly. Owing to the drawbacks noted above, *viz.*, ability to make shift without such material favors as we can offer, the disintegrating effects of factional strifes and sensitiveness to the worldly cry of "pious pose," most of the pioneer graduates of the juvenile body quickly make shipwreck of their vocation to that of more advanced or adult grade. Of the entire group of striplings trained in the boys' association till seventeen or eighteen, perhaps less than thirty per cent. will hold to the parochial adult fraternity till twenty-one.<sup>1</sup> However, this better-disposed minority, if gathered steadily, year after year, from a large junior organization, will finally become a well-filled, influential, and lasting alliance of young men.

<sup>1</sup>This view is confined to the class (English-speaking) with which the writer has been chiefly in touch. While applying, of course, to the bulk of American young men, it does not hold regarding those (*e.g.*, our German-American coreligionists), who enjoy special facilities for organization in religious societies.

Hence, if workers or successions of workers would have adults extensively marshaled under the ægis of religion, they must accept the condition *sine qua non* for success, and first attend to the boys. *Adeo in teneris consuescere multum est.* Young men are already too old to begin. Let us, of course, go on laboring for them generously and untiringly; but no longer exclusively nor even chiefly and, therefore, fruitlessly. Even economy demands reconsideration of the course now generally pursued. Discrimination in favor of the older grade is paying an exorbitant price for comparatively trifling gains. It is building club structures which, in their collective annual output, seem sufficient to furnish a well-developed diocese with churches. It is idly sinking sums of money that would insure missionary triumphs in heathen nations. And all this while rejected juvenility, ready at ten times less cost to vivify the entire undertaking, loudly cries, "*Adolescentulus sum ego et contemptus.*"

Is such blind endeavor to continue? God grant that it may not! If the great work of adult organizations is to tower, it must be supported—like every other extensive moral or material structure—by solid foundations. Our very highest authority has vouchsafed to warningly confirm the common sense dictum, that they build unwisely who build on sand. To ignore boys and enroll young men is the same blunder that would be made in the educational field by abolishing primary schools and placing higher training as the sole object of time, money, and care.

## SECTION V—WHAT THE BOYS' ORGANIZER CAN DO

He can easily gather neighboring youngsters, stranded between the Catholic school (if they ever attended one) and the young men's society (should they ever join it), to guide them amidst the temptations of city life and during the dangerous transit from boyhood to manhood. With this accomplished, if the worker is able to see his clients enrolled in a senior association, so much the better; but meanwhile he will have already rendered them precious assistance toward gaining the "*unum necessarium*."

Opportunities for thus reaching the junior faithful are exceptionally rich on American soil, where our coreligionists are mainly gathered in populous centers and consequently within easy call of organizers. Indeed, the urban facilities afforded in this respect help largely to compensate for the moral drawbacks our Catholic citizens suffer through an almost complete confinement to city life. Verily, then, in our own land especially, the youthful "white harvest" is not only abundant, but also temptingly concentrated. May it please "the Lord of the harvest" to send a plenty of stout reapers and speedily shall a prodigious fulness of "good grain" be gathered into apostolic barns.

Finding a text in the universal "amen" elicited by this prayer, I make bold to submit that Divine Providence has already made remote provisions for an extensive apostolate. Even now, possible workers exist in abundance. "Not so," will be answered in sincere chorus; "boy gathering belongs only to rare individuals fitted therefor by the possession

of very special natural gifts." This reply does the important service of focusing attention on my immediate purpose, which is to labor toward silencing the cry, "special gifts"; that shibboleth of groundlessly apprehensive inactivity.

Therefore, whatever follows shall directly or indirectly recommend the work under consideration as one which persons of ordinary parts may prudently undertake. For the sake of defining and strengthening this position, let me respectfully put it in the form of a thesis, to be supported by some immediate considerations.



## CHAPTER II

### THESIS:—BOYS' DIRECTORS ARE NOT BORN BUT (SELF)-MADE

#### SECTION I—CLEARING THE GROUND

THE title of this chapter by no means holds me to the duty of showing that everybody can become an organizer of juveniles. First of all, we must make due allowance for multitudes of individuals, possessing both zeal and intelligence, and, nevertheless, afflicted with this or that exceptional shortcoming or peculiarity unfitting them for close dealings with the young.

Thus the would-be organizer is clearly disqualified by partiality or peevishness. Neither can he succeed if over-exacting—demanding, for example, attendance in Sunday clothes and polished shoes. Results are the same if he is evidently smitten with admiration for his own flights of sacred oratory. When such weaknesses render one, *prima facie*, incompetent, it does not take boys long to informally caucus him, and conclude, with coup-de-grace agreement, that he is, *e.g.*, a “doode,” or “fond of shootin’ off his mouth.”

Moreover, even of the majority free from glaring and specially embarrassing defects, not all can gather boys. Some natural aptitude is certainly required; but sad, indeed, is the mistake that would so magnify needful qualities as to wholly unman an apostolate not a whit, in point of fact, more ex-

clusive than walks of life daily trodden by multitudes.

Clearly enough, the higher pursuits of mankind are of two classes, differentiated by matriculation on lower and higher grades of undeveloped talent. The department incomparably the larger, which includes pretty much the entire business and professional fields, demands only fair natural ability coupled with earnest effort. Thus, many a lawyer or editor of ordinary personal resources adapts himself to the requirements of his profession and wins success simply by faithful, persevering application.

But above this somewhat plebeian school with its laurel wreaths for plain industry guided by common sense stands the select academy, sacred to genius and admitting only the favored few whose innate aptitudes are of rare occurrence. Of course when this higher temple of human endeavor is to be gained, the best of every-day intelligent, tireless effort can not replace the talismanic potency of superior birth advantages. The non-predestined devotee to music, even though he begins with ordinary delicacy of ear, touch, and taste, and ends by wearing out numberless fiddle strings, can never become master of the violin.

Now to which of these classes does the organizer of juveniles really belong? To be sure, people do not formally rate his work an affair of genius. Nevertheless, they usually give equally damaging honor, by lifting the work out of ordinary reach. Is the boy-saver indeed a *rara avis in terris*, whose exceptional and mysterious charm none may ply unless petted by nature, or is he a plain, ordinarily-

gifted individual who, when needed, can spring from the common throng?

This is a momentous question, since its answer means either spiritual orphanage or religious care for thousands and thousands of city boys. Happy to hold a view favoring the welfare of these countless precious young souls, I propose to show that the organizer of juniors is not, like the unapproachable poet, "born;" but that, in common with surgeons, bankers, merchants, and the like, he is "made" by careful development and well-directed application of ordinary, fair ability.

Meanwhile, in declaring that our vocation demands no more head than is required for a worldly pursuit, I am by no means allowing that these two departments of endeavor are equally loaded with details, nor that they involve anything like the same amount of preparatory training. On the contrary, notwithstanding the difficulties created by juvenile weaknesses, one who is at all competent easily learns to organize boys, and this in a laughably small fraction of the time he would spend in mastering any profession or somewhat extensive business. "Boy-gathering" stands to the sufficiently fitted but busy man as little more than a sort of recreation most helpful to others. To be sure a slight amount of work is involved, but that seems to resolve itself into part of the fun.

However, readers need not make ready to deny any silly assertion to the effect that in this affair all men are equal. Here, evidently, as in every other business, good and better results must follow accordingly as ability is of merely sufficient or very superior grade. At the same time lack of the high-

est possible efficiency will not discourage any one zealous enough to undertake the apostolate at all; for no person really enters the same unless he would work for God, and whoever works for God is content to do no more than God will have done.

We have now cleared the ground for what follows in favor of the view that ordinarily gifted people can become boy-savers.

While of course the contention is not one admitting of anything like exact demonstration, it plausibly claims initial support from the presentation of easily-found qualifications, these being considered along with glances at the chief difficulties of the work. The comparison thereby instituted can be trusted to acquire argumentative dignity by showing that the commonly occurring qualifications described are full of promise to make head against whatever difficulties must be met.

## SECTION II—THE BOY-SAVER'S FIRST ESSENTIAL— INTELLIGENT ZEAL

It goes without saying that unless moved by genuine supernatural zeal, no one will actively seek or largely promote the spiritual welfare of such as are practically thankless for any attentions of the kind. Wherefore, adhering to the rule already laid down, I simply assume, without at all undertaking to prove, that the boy-saver must possess this virtue in its essentials. However, a word can with consistency be said concerning the need of that natural discernment which should guide zeal, a quality much less commonly recognized as indispensable to the organizer of juveniles.

Of earnest workers free to choose their objects of labor, many injudiciously occupy themselves with slight gains even though far greater results are clearly within easy reach. Theirs is the motto, "*Ad gloriam Dei*," omitting altogether the potent word "*majorem*," which really peoples heaven. The apostle of this class, while perishing hundreds might be succored, often becomes so absorbed in a few souls as to closely resemble the mother hen. To her the brood is entirely the same be it large or small; whether she cares for twenty future barn-yard kings and queens or only one drooping chick there is exactly the same amount of scratching and clucking, the same display of feathers and fuss.

Now I class with those unfitted to become boys' organizers each and every such worthy person of short-sighted zeal. He is, perhaps, unable to understand the value of the throng of juveniles at all; or, if moved to action by a chance view of their collective importance, speedily loses sight of that value in the confusion of rags, rudeness, loquacity, mendacity, and pugnacity sure to characterize gatherings of the clans.

Our city boys, then, can not be materially aided by thoughtless workers gleefully and wholly absorbed in watering the few spiritual seedlings that sprout readily. They must depend on helpers of intelligent, wide-awake zeal able to fix mind and heart on the inestimably important, even if slow and intermittent, moral growth of the crowd of "uncontrollables" destined to control everything with time.

It should encourage aspirant workers conscious of temper that, with this deep, practical apprecia-



tion of the cause realized, the patience generally attributed to them need not exist by the supposed barrellful. Boy culture demands not a holy Job but a St. James the Greater; not self-restraint but perseverance; and this quality ever quickens on the warm bosom of discriminating zeal. Patience as opposed to impulsive outbursts always benefits the long-suffering spirit, of course; but its contribution to one's influence over lads is really of small account. To be sure, a peevish, morose nature can not succeed; but it must not be thought that the director of average placidity loses sway, if in emergencies he passes *a verbis ad verbera*, striking out expressively and impressively at the nearest of his beloved.

Intelligent zeal can likewise replace in the leader that affection for boys which is commonly thought an indispensable stimulus to labor in their behalf. One does not really need to like his clients but the work that saves them.

### SECTION III—THE BOY-SAVER'S SECOND ESSENTIAL —SOME DISCIPLINARY SKILL

A slight examination will show that this requirement, while disqualifying many, admits workers in amply sufficient numbers.

It eschews commonplace coercion, exercised even by the armed prison guard, to adopt that indefinable and inexplicable personal authority which wins on a minimum of punishment and is ideally applicable to youth. However, if on the one hand this efficiency of the better class is radically a natural gift, derivable from neither books nor teachers, on the other it is here demanded only in a modest

degree, that is, of encouragingly frequent occurrence among those otherwise fitted for the apostolate. Furthermore, since half of the skill in managing people, whether young or old, consists in watchful anticipation of difficulties, one is already more or less prepared to stand our disciplinary test if he is a patron of preventive expedients, such as this book endeavors to supply.

Thus, for example, a director who departs from the ordinary practice by insisting on the exclusion of children under thirteen, besides securing other advantages, thereby protects his pious meetings from a plentiful source of misconduct. It is obvious that in boys' societies of the sort now contemplated, religious meetings are practically the entire test of disciplinary skill. The members will not be very frequently gathered in numbers for other occasions; and, even so, they can always be controlled outside of the church by any one able to govern them within. But every month's increase in the average age of any youthful gathering means a lower degree on its thermometer of distraction and levity. Hence, to exchange a religious assembly, registering eleven years, for an older one of fifteen, is securing fully one-half of the spontaneous decorum and attention that would be obtained by passing from the same childish congregation to one made up of young men near their majority.

Now this far-reaching expedient is only a specimen of those to be employed for the removal of impediments to control. It should, therefore, be very inspiring to thoughtful directors that in this particular apostolic field we are permitted to save ourselves by a few dignified moves from disorderly

elements which, perhaps, could not be well overcome in open conflict.

SECTION IV—BOYS MORE CONTROLLABLE IN PIOUS  
ORGANIZATIONS THAN IN SCHOOLS

Prospective workers will certainly gain further courage by realizing that, for society purposes, unmannered city youngsters are abundantly able to compete in deportment with the lads of educational institutions. Though it be true that very few experienced persons have explained what it is to hold a gentle rod over rude urban undergrowth, people generally are none the less fully informed as to the amount of difficulty to be overcome in managing school-boys. Hence, as the two juvenile categories are easily comparable, new leaders can measure the degree of disciplinary skill required for organization by its pedagogical equivalent already sufficiently determined.

The writer has dealt extensively with societies composed of material, excellent in the main, but darkly shaded with a liberal sprinkling of local juvenile rowdydom, and can unhesitatingly declare that, during moments sacred to sodality purposes, such bodies display an excellence of deportment which the average student group may fail to reach. To be sure, devotion to the whole truth would unfold "before and after" doings not in accord with the meetings' record, but this fact merely gives encouraging assurance that, with the religious gatherings shortened, brightened, and otherwise safeguarded, juveniles who habitually raise "old Nick" in the streets are well able to down him in church.

This ex-aequo or even superior standing claimed for free and easy youngsters of all moral shapes and sizes in competition with regularly disciplined lads averaging a higher social class has such importance for boy-savers as to justify further effort toward establishing its reality. Hence, I would show that, from the nature of things, reckless town trotters must carry into their assemblies lesser tendencies to disorder than commonly attach to groups of better-reared young students.

Obviously, it is not to be asserted that our urban legions merit the palm of "good citizenship" in virtue of any gentler ordinary disposition; on the contrary, if transferred to their rivals' educational quarters, they might be imagined as leaving nothing thereof save basement excavations. The street-boy contingent is the more orderly of the two parties, simply because always on the friendliest of relations with the superior to whom it is subject for only brief, interesting, and consequently frictionless occasions. No wonder, then, that unruly ward rangers are able as law abiders to outdo carefully trained school-boys; the latter often smart under prolonged operation of rule and its repeated sanctions, while their appetite for mischief is whetted by ever-present opportunities to wreak vengeance on supposed wrong-doers in high places.

If, therefore, fitted for control in the class-room, have no fears as to your success in the disciplinary management of boys' organizations. It is partly in reference to efforts toward securing good conduct that I have emphasized the help accruing to natural competency from its union with priestly authority. To Catholic boys the man of the altar is the liv-

ing symbol of order; and his demand for that blessing, when made under circumstances at all favorable, can hardly be made in vain.

SECTION V—THE BOY-SAVER'S LAST ESSENTIAL—  
A READINESS FOR EXPEDIENTS CONGENIAL  
TO HIS CHARGES

As our young friends, besides being thoughtless, changeable, mischievous, and naturally disinclined to religious practices, are usually entirely free in the matter of taking up societies, it goes without saying that they can not be held unless with systematic effort. But I take the further step of asserting that, for success, this needful endeavor must in every possible way be planned to fit in with boys' likes and dislikes, their playfulness, mental shortsightedness, and irreligiosity.

Youthful training of any description is at its best when teachers get down to the level of their disciples before leading them to climb. On this principle, the kindergarten has opened up an immense field in which children are trained without departing from childish ways. However, so little of the kind is done for organized striplings that too often their society, with its weak attractions, excessive and dry religious proceedings, multiplied obligations and scant protective regulations, seems intended rather for old people with only one leg out of the grave than for agile, slippery Jims to be secured by none but especially contrived traps.

To be sure the priest selecting from promising expedients does very well in preferring such as are most congenial to himself; but for working pur-



poses it is one and the same thing whether he is an originator of methods or their copyist. An occasional unfortunate, however, can not act the part of either and is thereby disfranchised from the apostolate. This person is, *e.g.*, some scholarly man likely to be more or less at sea in matters outside of his books. Such a one, if in charge of a fraternity, would probably fail to discover the points demanding attention, or, if lucky in that respect, would be wholly at loss what to do; the real difficulty being a consciousness that after descending to ways entirely in keeping with the disposition of his constituents he would find himself too much out of his own element for any action whatever.

Meanwhile it must be maintained that the inability here described is by no means so prevalent as to make young people friendless. Educated persons really unable to adapt themselves to measures suitable to boys are the impractical minority who would be equally embarrassed in attempting the management of any ordinary small business.

#### SECTION VI—A CHEERING WORD

Foregoing observations have, it is hoped, placed directorial possibilities in a duly conservative but sufficiently encouraging light. Not all, but very many, stand the tests of intelligent zeal, moderate disciplinary ability, and a turn for expedients of the kind demanded; and, despite dissenting voices to be heard in the next chapter, this triple requirement is, I trust, accepted by most readers as covering all of the essentials for the proposed work.

However, the preceding *a priori* argument

ought not to be considered alone. As previously hinted, it should be taken conjointly with the methods to be considered throughout the rest of these writings. The coming exposition of expedients, while perhaps here and there of aid to workers already in the field, will offer prospectors a set of solutions complete for the entirety of problems that can arise and will thereby constitute a sort of *a posteriori* demonstration that juvenile organizations are entirely feasible.

But, before proceeding further, let me for a few moments have the ear of competent but hesitating friends in order to answer their reasons for inaction.

## CHAPTER III

### WHY NOT BEGIN?

#### SECTION I—"I HAVE NO PERSONAL MAGNETISM AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT TRY"

THIS opening objection describes the position taken by unbelievers whom the last chapter has failed to convert. To my three essential requirements for the apostolate they insist on adding a fourth—personal drawing power. Now, just as one should in all charity love heretics while hating heresy, so, with the warmest regard for these critics, I can hardly be patient with their slavery to a false idea that hides multitudes of bright talents in sinless napkins.

Withal, there is no need of denying that very considerable advantage attaches to personal winsomeness. Of course, *ceteris paribus*, the magnetic man will gather boys more easily and more inexpensively than another; but, full admission on this point yields no jot or tittle to the sadly mistaken view which makes charm of manner essential to success.

The present bold attempt at ousting personal magnetism from its usurped place of honor is inspired by conviction born of direct experience. The writer—willing to make encouraging exhibition of his own shortcomings—bears witness that, while never at a loss of expedients to triumphantly lead hundreds of boys, he nevertheless began, continues,

and must finish without any personal ease in juvenile intercourse. On the contrary, he confesses to an insurmountable stiffness and awkwardness toward youngsters in all transactions save those strictly essential to the operation of his sodality. What then! Can anybody be at once, and toward the same individuals, consciously incongenial and unconsciously attractive? And if this seems impossible, how can it be denied that method accomplishes all that is usually ascribed to magnetic influence?

But the doctrine demanding directors of spell-binding power is subject to new arraignment on the score of its blindness to juvenile nature, ever helplessly captivated by any fair supplies of good cheer. Find me the miracles of boyish independence slow to crowd about a personally unattractive, but generous, donor of, *e.g.*, baseballs, skates, and the like! Who are these lads? Where do they live? Assuredly, not in this land of the lovers of everything free.

Some really seem to believe that no one can even make a beginning with youngsters unless he lights up his audience with a fascinating smile and an abundance of chit-chat. How, then, are they gathered in throngs by the iron-faced candy slot-machine that neither smiles nor speaks at all? Nor am I a bit concerned, if this comparison suggests to more persistent adversaries a further difficulty which we shall now hear.

SECTION II—"ANY DONOR MECHANICALLY  
GATHERS A TRANSIENT CROWD; BUT ONLY  
THE MAGNETIC MAN CAN RETAIN IT"

This view is all the more disastrous to juvenile welfare for the reason that, on first consideration, it seems amply justified by general experience. Certainly, according to the common testimony of managers, boyish interest in unions is almost always characterized by startling fluctuations. Attendance, like tidal water, follows the moonshine of earthly vanities. On "occasions" all of the youngsters in town tumble over one another in wave-like eagerness for membership, while for routine society exercises there is scarcely a lad in sight.

Hence, observers judge that the best of business-like liberality, advertising, and maneuvering can at most collect only a temporary crowd; but to hold youth permanently! "Ay, there's the rub!" True, no doubt; but even the "rub" can be easily met by a competent rubber; and the latter's functions, I affirm, are certainly not monopolized by the exceedingly rare magnetic man.

It should be judged no sign of weakness, that the first part of any answer to the present objection carries a conditional prefix, since it is promised that the prefix shall disappear as these pages grow. So "if," before laying down the pen, I can show that by grading membership, nursing fidelity to rule, improving instructions while diversifying and otherwise popularizing religious meetings, the non-fascinating, commonplace worker is able to present a society echoing even on its serious side the divine assurance, "my yoke is sweet and my burden is



light," then will it be again possible for me to confidently cite boy nature in its own behalf. For, granted that organization duties thus fall short of being decidedly burdensome, juvenile hearts are clearly generous enough to accept the same at the call of a patron commended only by kindly deeds.

I write this with anything but a disposition to overload our younger brethren with compliments on the score of their loving responsiveness. In fact, the vast majority of profoundly grateful boys seem to die young—presumably from excessive emotion over the tenderness lavished on their cradled innocence. Nevertheless, common observation attests that juveniles are far enough removed from utter callousness to gather frequently about a benefactor, not altogether silly nor radically distasteful, and to warm to him at least sufficiently for any service free from onerous obligations.

This encouraging truth constitutes my tonic for good will, weak in the knees from lack of personal drawing power. Magnetic gifts, which few possess, are fully replaced by method, which many can easily acquire. Having found ways and means of softening your organization on its repellent side, learn the easy art of manipulating juvenile *dulcia vitae* modestly enough to escape the notice of hypocritical cupidity, but sufficiently for the development of some kindly feeling, and your lack of innate attractiveness will not be felt.

Budding intellects have no better last analysis of "magnetism" than "handsome is as handsome does"; which, for an apostolic patron, they may be conceived as turning into the scriptural quasi-equiv-

alent, "the Lord loves the cheerful giver." Consequently, our young philosophers freely plight their troth to any good angel—no matter how reserved—who, while speaking of eternity, actively helps boys to the consummation of their supremely important temporal destiny, or earthly salvation; to be worked out on sportive lines.

I can not, however, finish without giving the rejected notion a parting thrust, by drawing attention to its numerous evident failures in practice. When an adult is united with juveniles with personal drawing power for bond it is often fair to ask this question, Has he magnetized the younger element, or has the younger element magnetized him? Too often, with the latter possibility realized, the worker comes to grief either on the rock of partiality or through such familiarity with all hands as proverbially "breeds contempt."

SECTION III—"MANAGEMENT OF A BOYS' SOCIETY,  
LIKE THAT OF A LARGE SUNDAY-SCHOOL, OC-  
CUPIES PRETTY MUCH ALL OF ONE'S  
TIME; IT SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN  
ONLY BY THOSE WHO HAVE  
NOTHING ELSE TO DO"

Apprehensiveness on the score of time outlay is likely to be all the greater, when, as I usually suppose, there is question of enrolling young persons of inferior moral character. Since it is really a difficult task to gather even well-reared little Sunday-school bench-warmers and keep them in faithful attendance, the startled worker plausibly exclaims, "What a burden, then, to organize and follow up

boys of even more advanced years, and of equally small acquaintance with religious influence!"

Nevertheless, let me, in defense of the cause, remark that this objection contemplates the juvenile association under the very form earnestly repudiated above. It makes of it an unattractive sort of Sunday-school senior-annex to which youngsters are committed, *nolentes volentes*, by combined sacerdotal and parental authority. It has in mind only religious meetings so monotonously insipid as to shut off nearly all voluntary candidacy and force truancy into extensive play. This false picture torments the would-be organizer with outlines of the misery involved in constantly hunting up new members and hunting down old ones. No wonder that, being a busy man, he is dismayed by the ambulatory prospect.

But, on the contrary, such forebodings are by no means justified by the fraternity these pages advocate; a fraternity so permeated with gospel of "a good time" that its very duties are almost popular, and its actual members have become missionaries for the increase of their own number. Excessive emphasis can not be placed on the keynote of this situation that under normal conditions boys will gather boys. The director who must look up recruits is, in fact, hardly competent; and his society, being insufficiently attractive to inspire in present members the thought of enlisting their companions, must be rated a failure.

Neither will marks for non-attendance give extensive occupation in associations of the class here advocated. When enrolment is, as it should be, not only spontaneous but by privilege, the task of

counting noses at meetings will not be reduced to an empty formality necessitating an after-canvass of the town by the one in charge. In fact, I deprecate the common practice of coupling announcements of boys' meetings with appeals from the altar, begging of parents to "see that their sons are present." The organization is hardly worth having unless a majority are desirous of attending whether parents so desire or not; and when this most desirable feeling exists, open anticipation of truancy, with publicly-expressed dependence on domestic authority as a check to the same, weakens the dominant spirit of manly loyalty, thereby doing far more harm than good.

In addition to this, any one, by devising a system of printed post-card notices and warnings, come-and-see-me calls, etc., can easily arrange to stay under his own roof while dealing with deserters and "drumming them up." Thus, visits to homes, no matter how beneficial in themselves, cease to be necessary for the maintenance of full ranks and the department of attendance, usually considered a time consumer, seems almost self-operating. Let the labor of caring for the attendance books and addressing communications all be done by a bright, willing boy secretary, and the director's close supervision of these details, even when hundreds of members are carried, need not occupy more than a weekly short hour.

SECTION IV—"THE CHANCES ARE THAT, OWING TO A LACK OF LEISURE, MONEY, OR QUALIFICATIONS, I WOULD NOT SUCCEED. ARE THERE NOT ENOUGH FAILURES?"

Zealous readers afraid to lay hands on the plow should consider that in this affair small beginnings, which ought to be preferred anyway, will enable one to make trial not only at inconsiderable expenditure of time and money but also with very gentle tests of personal ability.

Clearly nothing whatever can be lost by gathering a mere handful of boys. Should favorable results justify further progress, the organizer will be able to confirm experimentally my contention that the financial difficulty never becomes insuperable, and that the necessary outlay of effort by no means grows proportionally with increase of followers.

From the standpoint of general expediency alone, and aside from any diffidence on the part of would-be leaders, it seems really absurd to call in all the boys from afar and wide for the christening of their society. A juvenile organization freely absorbs unsubstantial supplies of youthful changeability, effervescence, and misdoing and therefore needs slow growth for the acquirement of systematic, sturdy activity. In consequence, the more auspicious opening is a very modest one. Avoid public announcement and a consequent numerous but rapidly vanishing group of charter members. Fault could not be found if one should begin, like our blessed Lord, with a dozen chosen associates and should make himself strong with these before venturing to call in the unlucky thirteenth.



Hasten slowly. When kindness, attractions, and brevity of religious exercises shall have once commended the new society to the little band of first-comers, let it expand gradually, under steady maintenance of rule and with the gates of suspension, like theater exits, in plain sight. At all times the spiritual guide's best attitude—strongly suggestive of mundane “bluff”—is that of dismissing lax members gladly and of accepting new ones with the cheerful patience of one already blessed with more members than can be easily accommodated. Now here is an initial policy which, while most favorable to the upbuilding of the society, permits the director to retire at the sacrifice of no large outlay of any kind should his unfitness at any time seem established.

SECTION V—“AFTER A WHILE MY RESIDENCE WILL  
CHANGE, AND ANYTHING I ESTABLISH WILL  
FAIL FOR WANT OF A SUCCESSOR”

The fact, underlying this view, that practical boy-savers are now sadly lacking, can not be gainsaid. At present, then, it is a matter of happy chance if one of them immediately succeeds another. Hence, the efficient organizer of to-day is generally condemned to labor with consciousness that the local association will, almost inevitably, become moribund on his withdrawal from its direction.

But, notwithstanding this state of affairs, the objection just advanced seems to me the weakest of all. It assumes that nothing is gained by a short-lived though otherwise commendable boys' society.

Is there, then, no gain if only during a few months a lot of young fellows are so held as to experience a new regard for religion, the sacraments, and morality? Early advancement in piety should not be likened to a business trip, profitless till a certain distance is traveled, but to a health tour in which every mile counts.

If extensive preliminaries, such as the erection of buildings or a prolonged course of preparatory study, were necessary before this work could be undertaken, few might prudently enroll themselves on the active list; but no real sinking fund in cash, labor, or anxiety is called for. In God's name, then, why not begin? Since even *in transitu* and without any annoyance we are able to become good Samaritans, giving a breath of life to souls "half dead," will the favor be refused because none of our race can follow, to succor new victims of the robber-haunted roadway? Really, when one explains inaction by this fear that afterward the work will not be sustained, I can not but wonder whether the speaker, if a gold seeker, would decline taking his burden of yellow treasure from a lucky find until assured that others were following close behind to carry off the rest.

Neither is it true, that those established in this apostolate must lose occupation by change of residence. They can, as a matter of fact, take the work with them to their new homes. The boys' leader, having adopted a congenial *modus operandi*, is equipped for life and should assume care of the young at every halting place on his earthly pilgrimage. Removal from city to city need be no more to him than change of regiments to a colonel.

Far from making any Othello-like complaint of "occupation gone," he has only to summon and improve fresh throngs of boys of the new town by methods previously acquired and now become easy with practice. Thus the experienced and willing worker can move about without becoming any the less an apostolic fisherman. Having simple, portable tackle constantly at hand, he is always ready for the fish—and the fish are everywhere.

And now, having pictured the general features of the apostolate and having sought for it the favorable consideration of the many who are really able to join with present laborers, I must support the encouraging views thus far advanced by supplying further proof of the apostolate's practicability. This will be done by describing "from life" some of the ways and means through which juniors can be gathered, managed, and spiritually improved.

## CHAPTER IV

### PHILANTHROPY OUTDONE

#### SECTION I—HUMANITARIANISM GOOD: RELIGION BETTER

THE writer, offering at this point methods for attracting youngsters and consequently for occupying them during their free time, is well aware that by certain critics his coming suggestions will be rated intolerably trivial. Pages devoted to this subject but presenting nothing primarily in favor of mental nor of physical development, nothing even directly in furtherance of natural morality, can hardly seem to secular philanthropists other than fruitless, undignified, and even childish. Accordingly, arrival on the field of puerilities inspires a loud reminder that attractions insignificant in themselves are to be proposed with the highest possible aim; it is that of drawing juveniles to life-long and practical profession of the Catholic faith.

However, the secular patron of youth may by no means condemn the above proceeding as if sterile of at least the temporal advantages which his own purely secular labors bestow. Indeed, in point of earthly favors conferred on his fellow-men, the strictly religious worker far outdoes the most benevolent of non-religious philanthropists. This truth plainly appears, if we consider the sources of happiness here below and contrast the contributions made by the twain of endeavorers thereunto.

Corporal well-being, for example, depends on temperance and purity. Now, while temperance and purity derive only indirect and lesser encouragement from humanitarian gymnasia, fresh-air parties, and the like, faith is pre-eminently the power through which these virtues can really thrive. And, far outclassing the matter of individual health, stands society's absolute necessity of preserving such public morality as is essential to social existence. But, though it is of the very foundation of this morality that family integrity and proprietary rights be made secure, philanthropy can not deal forcibly, nor even intelligently, with these supremely important needs.

Let us not mistake: Faith—sole champion of the marriage bond, sole bulwark against growing anarchism—alone guarantees to the modern world security for either the social unit, or for possessions acquired. Whoever, then, moves some portion of the people to religious practice is, without explicit profession of humanitarianism, a prince among humanitarians. He, thereby, achieves single-handed far more for the morality of the masses—far more, consequently, for their physical well-being and for their temporal happiness in general—than do scores of workers having for object the promotion of merely corporal welfare, mental culture, or of even such virtues as spring from nature alone.

## SECTION II—STOOPING TO CONQUER

Wherefore in all earnestness, "*honi soit qui mal y pense*." This practical friend of youth must abound in pristine apostolic "foolishness" shaped to



suit juvenile conditions in our twentieth-century towns. In other words, he must establish himself in subserviency to the uncultivated boyish demand for fun to be enjoyed for fun's sake alone. And, if only as an earnest of absolute surrender, this adult capitulation needs to be confirmed by submissively eager attention to diversions which, *per se*, are irredeemably of trifling weight. In this work, maximum success awaits the *maximus in minimis* patron who, without sacrifice of due personal bearing, goes hand in hand with clients that must be led by the hand if led at all.

Ordinarily, moreover, the genuine organizer can not rest content with having contrived merely his bare readmission into the juvenile world, but must endeavor to become the leading citizen in this unwealthy commonwealth. Hence, it is usually part of his vocation to provide in great abundance the fun-making commodities which, according to junior public opinion, make life worth living. To be sure success in rendering religious meetings non-burdensome, or even just a bit perceptibly attractive, permits the boy-winner to utilize amusements to a lesser extent; nevertheless, to the end of his career he will hardly get on without leaning to them with the whole-heartedness of one who has planned his society fully as much for a good time as for any other purpose.

Furthermore, it is commonly of the highest importance to supply inducements not only in safe profusion but also in considerable variety. Beardless pleasure seekers, though less than their elders, are swayed by divergent preferences; and these preferences to be fully satisfied require that

the "elective system" be applied at least to attractions.

### SECTION III—STOOPING WITH DIGNITY

This heading, given place merely as a means of laying stress on present views, is really included in the last section's title. Clearly the spiritual leader of striplings in their teens who really "stoops to conquer" must stoop with dignity. Otherwise he would bend, not to conquer, but to be officially slain. However, this remark carries no suggestion that workers for juveniles will court security in loftiness of tone and bearing. On the contrary, hardly any would-be boys' apostle finds himself more suddenly and everlastingly "out of business" than the one who, according to the youngsters, "was puttin' on airs."

Neither are matters improved when the adult friend, drifting toward the opposite extreme, falls so unreservedly into youthful ways that associated juniors account him merely their older "chum." If crippled by this radical mistake one will hardly obtain, even by means of a cassock, any notable amount of salutary influence over boys. Youngsters instinctively feel that they can do about as well by themselves as with any man who has become wholly one of themselves.

Whoever, then, would bend gracefully to juvenile followers must oblige the latter to regard him as never anything less than their benignly serious superior. In fact, his entire management should be shaped into a gentle but emphatic denial of boyish interest in boyish affairs. Hence, the following

pages on society attractions everywhere suppose that in such matters the spiritual director does little more than plan and inspire, leaving the direct superintendence of actualities to representatives placed between himself and the youthful throng. It will be advantageous if, even in the slightest transactions of the kind, this policy is maintained: be boyish in the things done; never in your way of doing.

Let us suppose, for example, that, by the operation of a prize system to be described later, you are going to donate a large number of baseballs to members of the fraternity. To be sure, there will be no really compromising participation in juvenilities should you personally hand these gifts to their new possessors; nevertheless—finical as my preference may first seem—I would advise rather that each of the beneficiaries receive from your hands a card “good for one baseball,” when presented at some designated local store. The latter method, no less than the former, is demonstrative of good will toward the boys; while, not to speak of an additional advantage to be stated later, it does the special service of establishing the giver in a desirable position of aloofness from details of the juvenile business in hand.

#### SECTION IV—FAVORITISM

If the leader ought to guard against any display of boyish interest in the doings of his followers, he certainly invokes utter ruin by taking a boyish interest in his followers themselves.

Indeed, since juvenile suspicions of favoritism

are easily aroused, the director can hardly afford to be known as having, among the members, any special friends at all. Whoever sins in this respect not only strips himself of needful "dignity" but, in another way, sacrifices success. At nearly every step the patron's utter impartiality is, to his clients, the sole sufficient guarantee that things are done fairly and that, consequently, the society is worth having. The worker, then, who has been with his boys enough to be really known by them should be recognized as one who "ain't got no pets"; or, if not so reputed, may quite as well quit.

The priestly organizer, in virtue of his sacred character, will secure this requisite "vote of confidence" more easily than another; nevertheless, in common with the secular patron, he must be at pains to win and retain it. Fortunately, however, downright earnestness in the work is, of itself, the strongest recommendation for impartiality; junior observers, noting the leader's abundant devotion to the body as a whole, are likely to judge therefrom that his interest in individuals is entirely subordinated to the common weal.

#### SECTION V—IN DEEP WATER

It must be confessed that in advocating a bearing toward boys which will permit the priest to mingle with them and their doings without ever appearing other than their condescending superior, I have entered into a subject capable of indefinite development. One would need to don a thinking cap of quality and sit thereunder through a minor eternity should he aim at directing, in detail, the

conduct of organizers who differ much in temperament, and who work under diverse conditions.

However, it seems practicable to venture just a little into this important subject by suggesting certain precautions which, as it seems, must usually though not invariably prove serviceable to each and every boys' friend. Hence the following "tips."

Be circumspect as regards repeated appearances or frequent extended conversations with individuals. As a following chapter will contend, brief private interviews are a prime necessity to our apostolate, but prolonged interviews, by creating suspicions of favoritism, can do great harm.

Never call a junior, after boy fashion, by only his family name. Address him, paternally, as he was addressed at his baptism: or, should the Christian name be forgotten, ask it of the bearer.

Be exact in keeping all promises, not merely as they have been made, but if possible as they may have been understood. Under the influence of youthful imaginings anticipation of published future attractions constitutes no small part of their charm; consequently, these latter when once on the horizon are of increased power if regarded as "a dead sure thing."

Should you occasionally join with youngsters in any amusement contest, do so only with evident pleasure at having your opponents win, and, consequently, with open eagerness to grant them every advantage, whether the advantage be claimed or overlooked.

Since party divisions are natural to boys, neu-



trality regarding these divisions is normal to the director. When, therefore, games or other momentous events separate the forces into opposing camps, attach yourself, if possible, to neither side but remain equally interested in the fortunes of each.

Unless really forced by special circumstances, never undertake the settlement of disputes. Distrust even the educational or chivalrous impulse that inclines one to champion the cause of youngsters who are guileless or weak.<sup>1</sup> But the bully! Never mind the bully. That disturber can, as a rule, be relinquished for treatment to the boys themselves. Generally he is soon suppressed by either a defensive alliance on the part of the small boy victims, or by threatening prospects of "big brother" intervention.

Neither would it seem an unmixed evil should the spiritual guide accidentally miss the fisticuff unpleasantness that may happen to grow out of the amusement gathering. After all it is when this kind of conflict is over that one usually deals with the conflict best.

The import of these suggestions will be readily grasped. They are designed to assist the patron in surrounding himself with an atmosphere of impartiality, kindness, disinterestedness, and tranquillity. Graced by such environment, he stoops with dignity and, stooping, wins respect.

<sup>1</sup>I am aware that this view is rank heresy to the good men and women who busily gather boys for recreation precisely in order to train them in fair and gentle conduct. But, let it be repeated, my real object is not to teach natural virtues but to implant religion. And religion, once it is implanted, abundantly instils all virtues, whether they make for this world or for the next.

## SECTION VI—AN OBJECTION:—"RELIGIOUS FEATURES ENDANGERED"

Possibly some readers are beginning to fear that a church society, organized in accordance with the foregoing ideas, may take on such extensive secular development as to crowd pious exercises to the wall and thus forfeit its religious character.

The objection is answered by the view that, with boys in their teens as good grain to be garnered, the husbandman succeeds best by a continuous process of tilling and sowing interspersed with short, almost stealthy, harvestings. The main achievement is to draw, not a few promising individuals, but the entire careless giddy throng within an avowedly religious organization. This accomplished, most gratifying spiritual results can not but follow even though labor for souls seems, at first glance, almost lost in the promotion of amusements that gain and hold the crowd. Hence, the spiritual machinery of a juvenile fraternity is probably never in better operation than when banked and flanked with temporalities until, to cursory observers, nearly out of sight.<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing view is confirmed by an appeal to boy nature. Naturally enough, the sodality congenial to urban undergrowth is one which at first

<sup>1</sup>It is a mistake to suppose our utmost can be done against early idleness by simply keeping boys physically on the go. Over and above that it is feasible, by providing harmless subject-matter, to guide and elevate the conversations which idleness would corrupt and in which wrinkleless gossips, during otherwise unoccupied moments, are always engaged. Accordingly, the abundant varied natural attractions and even some of the sacred features of a properly conducted society can prove a blessing for juveniles by giving their chat a semi-religious tone especially helpful to morality.

and second and several glances appears to make no more of church work than do youngsters themselves. Now it is commonly seen that the average modern young Christian, sufficiently faithful but at the same time guarded against pious over-exertion, manages to remember the obligation of hearing Sunday Mass and is edifyingly impressed with the advantage of receiving holy communion, but limits his church occupations to these sacred events. Once they are over the "devotee," throwing himself into the local worldly "push," knocks about town as carelessly and as obstreperously as any other.

Now the society that would adapt itself to juvenile hearts must follow suit. It is of necessity a union in which the members, holding well enough to a weekly evening service and to fixed communion days, are mostly busied on delectable secular lines. For city sodalities true to boy nature, here then is a motto: diluted asceticism and multiplied good cheer.

It follows, of course, that the thoroughgoing organization will as a rule move rather noisily. Indeed, if the whole truth must be told concerning this worthy aggregation recruited from all sorts and susceptible in some matters to only light direction, let me state that it is but all the more plainly enriched with spiritual possibilities when semi-occasionally discovered at the verge of a scrape.

#### SECTION VII—ANOTHER OBJECTION:—"VENAL PRACTICE OF RELIGION WILL RESULT"

But while the worker, as far as personal sacrifice is concerned, would cheerfully humble himself

and cater extensively to youthful appetites for fun he may, perhaps, hesitate in the interests of those befriended. Possibly he demands of himself whether boys whom an array of material inducements must coax to the side of religion will not become merely time-serving Christians and all the worse off for having borne the name.

While some would-be moralists, few and severe, may answer this question affirmatively, a favorable reply is received from the mass of young people's accredited guides. The latter declare that objection can not be reasonably made to the practice of coaxing by means of natural attractions provided the latter be kept within the measure to merely suggest and stimulate membership without really buying boys up. But the evil of overdoing things can not possibly attach to the trifling inducements of these pages which, making no appeal to sordid motives, suffice merely to advertise one's society among neighboring youngsters and to gently draw them thereunto.

Moreover, in practice, the prudence here advocated will, perforce, nearly always prevail; for whoever would slight the golden rule of moderation to the extent of working spiritual harm in boys must needs pay the penalty from a purse amply endowed with the length his head has been denied.

But here I am going to take the further step of affirming that appreciable harm does not result even if, on comparatively small inducements, giddy amusement seekers crowd in solely for "the fun that's goin'," and of course with the result of soon perceiving that attendance under temporal aspects pays less than a "living wage." In point of fact,

most of the applicants who thus arrive for play remain to pray. But—and this is more to my present purpose—the minority who promptly withdraw because “there’s nuffin’ in it,” are not really deteriorated by the entire proceeding.

When through “salaried” church attendance young people who are already badly disposed suffer further privation of religious spirit, their new loss must be attributed not to incidental but to continuous participation in pious exercises found distasteful. It is the weariness of a prolonged hypocritical experience that thoroughly alienates from religion; but enrolment in a church society, be it ever so mercenary, can hardly breed spiritual retrogression when followed by almost immediate disappointment and withdrawal.

Clearly, then, praise, not adverse criticism, is merited by religious workers for boys who hold out natural inducements in prudently measured profusion. Our cities swarm with frolicsome but more or less careless young Christians; begin with them at their play and finish with them at the altar. It is a most inspiring fact that, under tactful manipulation, agencies, intrinsically of trifling value, avail to thwart even the demon of irreligion and anarchy who waits on the maturity of our junior element and, with increasing success, diverts its energies into iniquitous channels.

Priests, lay workers, friends of God, one and all—which is the better: boyish piety presently thriving under modest showers of fun-promoting favors, or an apostate future of bloodshed and blasphemy? Which are preferable: baseballs now, helping devotion; or rifle shot later, sustaining anathemas?



## CHAPTER V

### SPREADING THE SALVATION NET

#### SECTION I—PASTIMES IN THE SHADOW OF THE CHURCH

NATURAL attractions, even aside from actual service as the supports of faith-promoting juvenile societies, have power of their own to instil and increase juvenile love of the Church; in order to exercise this sublime power, attractions demand but a single and easily-secured condition:—they need only to be closely associated with sacred precincts.

For, assuredly, the material house of God, abounding as it does in sacramental and devotional food for the spirit, becomes more homelike to lads who have found much amusement, or at least abundant inspiration and material help for amusement, under its very walls. And then, diversions, held really or figuratively in churchly shadow, secure for young Catholics the inestimable gain, that during susceptible years and through the familiarities of play time they are placed for all the trials and temptations of life on terms of easy approach to the priest. It is truly most deplorable that men with faith in their hearts often actually shun the pastors who are in reality their truest friends. Does not experience show that warmth or coldness toward the human channels of divine favor powerfully predisposes souls for or against the very blessings these channels convey? There is, then, only too

much ground for concern over the spiritual status of brethren showing studious and habitual aloofness from the minister of God. Sadly enough, their distance-keeping often bespeaks confirmed indifference to the truths which the priest proclaims, and real aversion from the sacraments he offers with anointed hands.

Happy, on the other hand, are adults who, during boyhood days, have become permanently established on a friendly footing with some one clergyman and, through this representative, with all pastors of souls. Such persons, by their readiness to seek needed guidance and spiritual help, are forearmed against evil; they enjoy special, lasting facilities for the fulfilment of Catholic duties; or, if parted from the practice of their faith, are never at heart so far adrift but that they can return with ease.

#### SECTION II—A BLESSING FOR CITY BOYS ESPECIALLY

To be sure, in many village parishes, links of personal friendship between priests and juveniles are forged as a natural result of pastoral intercourse with the individual members, young and old, of a limited flock. Our cities, however, do not generally offer such facilities. An American urban parish of five thousand souls will usually include something like three hundred boys in their teens. But certainly no priest, though of ever so much zealous activity, dreams it possible, by means of the chance interviews occurring in general parochial work, to place himself on any intimate footing with so large a number. On the other hand, pretty

much all of these juveniles can be easily summoned for recreative purposes; and thereupon follows the happy result that, through mere earthly amusement enjoyed under pastoral auspices, the rompers form with their spiritual leader friendships fruitful in eternal joys.

Here, then, at merely a preliminary glance, is seen in religiously utilized natural attractions a power for good, even were these attractions disconnected from all organized work. In practice, of course, they are rarely so separated but are almost invariably adopted as the underpinning of pious societies, through which results that are still richer than the above, and, indeed, of unspeakable value, are obtained. Meanwhile it is refreshing to begin by noting how much natural attractions were able to accomplish of themselves and even wholly apart from the organizations which they popularize and fill.

By all means, then, let the boys be sometimes called churchward, not for devotion, but for the presents, entertainments, sports, etc., congenial to their age and sex. When such occasions create playful assemblies the direction of affairs by even-tempered young laymen will not leave the priest—the provider of paraphernalia, prizes, and spectators—any less the soul of all that occurs. Now this prominence in proceedings, together with some fatherly interest in results, suffices to place the clerical director in the sunshine of youthful fun that melts the ice (it is better melted than broken); unites gray locks and brown, theology and the Rs, a patron “of the cloth” with clients scant of clothing.

## SECTION III—KEEP ORGANIZED JUVENILES BEFORE THE PUBLIC

But, in wielding natural attractions for the specific purpose of supporting his society, the efficient worker can not be content with a methodless, helter-skelter provision of whatever pleases boys. By the tactful and methodical manipulation of inducements one adds wonderfully to their influence.

In this connection let me remark that natural attractions are chiefly the instruments by which we can secure a vital, though oft-disregarded feature of successful boys' unions—secular display. The two last words name a policy by which our lively younger brethren are enabled to appear before the public—by parades, badges, athletics, and what not—with such prominence and frequency as to fully awaken the pride they so easily conceive for whatever is their own. If masculine juvenility is anything, it is hopelessly boastful, or, in boyish phraseology, fond of "blowin' its own horn." For goodness' sake, then, let us turn this incurable weakness to account by encouraging youngsters to "blow" themselves well along on the road from earth to a happy eternity!

When a junior association is thus able to make some local stir, its first gain is attractiveness of a new and higher order. Many youngsters in their teens, who perhaps could never be won by the little inducements offered, will respectfully apply for admission into the body that to them seems of local prominence. Even careless parents are frequently so influenced by the sodality's public activity that although personally neglectful of church affairs

they watchfully insist that their sons shall join the same and faithfully take part in all proceedings, whether of secular or religious cast. Indeed, the organization, so conducted as to gain some public notice, can rapidly attain to a sort of universality, and certainly, if once accepted by half of the lads of the locality, it has excellent hope of soon absorbing, practically, the other half.

#### SECTION IV—A GREATER ADVANTAGE

A second and still more valuable gain resulting from seeming secular prominence is a vast increase of that salutary influence which the organization should bring to bear on its members. The society that timorously nestles at the sanctuary strikes the average boy-observer as being weak and, at most, only piously ornamental. To his way of thinking it lacks energy and power of command. Let the fraternity, however, move abroad to don the honors of athletics, military drill, etc., and at once its worldly position inspires, in the unreflecting juvenile mind, far higher conceptions of inherent spiritual authority.

For this reason, after our young friends are actually enrolled, there is a world of difference between their scant submission to an organization hidden away in the church and the dutiful obedience they pay to one that is ever in public operation and, as the youngsters think, the talk of the town. Thus, for example, the total abstinence pledge, if justified by local circumstances, is likely to prove something of a failure or a fair success accordingly as the union adopting the pledge is of retiringly re-



ligious character, or in the enjoyment of an extensively developed secular side. Under the first of these conditions, the renunciation of intoxicants may figure as merely a sort of playfully pious promise made before nobody in particular and soon to be forgotten; but in the second instance it usually takes on the gravity of a quasi-vow solemnly accepted by a visible authority forever asserting itself in the chief undertakings of life that occupy the local juvenile mind.

The same is to be repeated concerning every other effort put forth for the advancement of religion and morality in the common run of boys; success is always in great measure dependent on the idea entertained by the members of *their society's secular standing*. Exhortations, say in favor of frequent communion or of better attendance at religious meetings, be they, *per se*, ever so much disconnected from worldly things, will strike home all the more forcibly if delivered immediately after, *e.g.*, a thronged and rousingly successful public field-day.

#### SECTION V—A STANDARD CATHOLIC ARGUMENT APPLIED

When a juvenile church society has achieved secular prominence, the members reap spiritual profit, not only through its religious mechanism, but also from even the bare fact of keeping their names on its roll. This assertion is supported by an application of the unanswerable argument advanced in favor of Christian education.

While making tremendous sacrifice for the erec-

tion and maintenance of Catholic schools, we are constantly explaining that these institutions are cherished, not so much for their attention to catechetical instruction, which with less effort might perhaps be fairly well imparted in Sunday-schools, etc., as for their unique efficiency in making religion duly prominent before minds that are being opened by intellectual application. Christian education, therefore, is shown to rest chiefly on the principle that pupils, by finding religion always in the lead, will become more respectful, loving, and obedient children of Mother Church. Its strongest support is the view that young people secure unspeakable spiritual gain when God's cause is ever presented to them installed in its true place; *i.e.*, dominating, not only class practices and the seemingly authoritative convictions of teachers, but, also, and more especially, the grand vistas of life opened up by the secular studies themselves.

Now, the utilization of juvenile diversions, as here proposed, is but a special application of this same venerable educational principle. Since young people conceive increased reverence for the Gospel, found paramount at school, assuredly they must profit anew, albeit in lesser degree, when to their minds the Gospel, represented by their own society, looms up amidst the live affairs of the locality.

These considerations, then, assure us that young people who find their pious association accepted for conversation at home, in school, and at the workshop will thereby gain in loyalty to the association's call and in docility to its influence, while becoming manlier, more outspoken, and more faithful sons of Mother Church.

SECTION VI—NEWSPAPERS AND SHOW WINDOWS  
HELPFUL

The necessity of publishing the fraternity's doings directs our attention to the efficient, and usually available advertising agencies just mentioned. Outside of the largest of our cities most editors readily open their columns to the affairs of a live juvenile body; though, to be sure, it is chiefly in the smaller places that such items, like other minor local affairs, are accorded any considerable prominence and space. This newspaper readiness in favor of boys is after all no more than might, as a matter of commutative justice, be expected; for, everywhere and always, tireless treble vocalists are the stanchest of business friends to the ephemeral printed page. Let the director by all means secure for his work whatever journalistic help is obtainable. From an administrative standpoint the reporter's pencil is valuable as establishing very effectively a sort of bulletin by which members—sometimes personally, oftener perhaps through their elders—come to know, *e.g.*, of meetings resumed or of approaching communion days.

Moreover, the reporter's descriptions of society doings while of profit to the members at large are especially beneficial to boys who may appear by name. Finding one's juvenile self for the first time in print is quite an event in early life; and events important to youth, if only connected with church affairs, assist religion to make deeper impress on the budding mind.

Then, again, the youngster who has climbed some

distance up the steep way of righteousness is less in danger of retracing steps that have left quasi-indelible marks in printer's ink. When Johnnie has received his diploma, it is important that all the world should be told thereof in black and white; for the larger the audience before which Johnnie has thus promised well-doing the stronger our hope that he will always do well.

And, finally, let me apply to this matter the view, regarding secular display, which dominates the present chapter. Since the boys' society which contrives to secure something of a place before the community gains thereby stronger hold on the members, it is certainly worth remembering that the society can not be better exploited than through the typographical herald which penetrates every nook and corner of the town. Much, then, is gained by rushing our young friends into print at every event, religious or secular, connected with their society life.

Additional excellent advertisement for the fraternity is obtainable through the show windows of stores. It is well to exhibit, in these booths of the town's permanent bazaar, any material objects—photographs, specimen-diplomas, bicycles or other special prizes, etc.—illustrative of what is being done.

Possibly this suggestion excites on the part of some grave friends a smile of incredulous surprise. The doubters, unaccustomed to give personal attention to store displays, judge from their own indifference that such displays are generally overlooked. Merchants, however, who are the parties chiefly interested, hold a contrary view and con-

firm the same by expending on show windows sums that are surprisingly large.

Accordingly, these free exhibits can be trusted to materially help toward keeping the society before the general public. Moreover, the members themselves will not fail to take profitable surveys of any of the society's belongings that store fronts happen to display. Indeed, the average boy is seen to have quite a liking for show windows—especially while giving his jaded bundle needed rest, or regaining breath on the way to school.



## CHAPTER VI

### GIFTS

#### SECTION I—"BEATIUS EST MAGIS DARE"

WHEN planning material favors, one may with full confidence adopt that of showering little presents on his *entourage*. Let the patron but make himself known as a person from whom junior neighbors can have something for nothing and at once he will unfailingly be in great demand.

It should be noted, furthermore, that there is more administrative ease in presentations than attaches to inducements offered in any other shape. Success regarding these benefactions, independent as it is of the weather, assistance of subordinates, etc., remains always within the director's unaided reach. To be sure, gifts demand for their very existence some little financial competency; but, with that essential preliminary secured, they pass with such rapidity and precision from the hand of the giver to the expectant palms of his followers as to almost seem self-distributing.

Moreover, the helpfulness of this feature is by no means restricted to its influence in filling the ranks. Naturally, donations will ever be of a kind to occupy the recipients and to thereby help free them from mischief's grasp. Skates, for example, by drawing a youth from idle winter quarters to romps on the ice, often enable him to substitute bodily slips and falls for those of a spiritual nature.

And even the dreaded juvenile pocket-knife, unfriendly as it is to material things round about, has the compensatory virtue of frequently diverting a boy's destructive energies from his own higher self.

But, after all, the best of material life-preservers for souls are those which, by occupying all hands, save from mischief not merely a single imperilled lad, but his companions besides. In this respect baseball goods, as well as footballs, are exceptionally valuable. Any one of these articles, until pounded beyond recognition, becomes a daily summons for everybody to engage in active play, not to mention a further call to oust or defend the umpire with discussion of his alleged sins.

The bicycle, of course, affords its juvenile owner special protection. Mounted on his "silent steed," any tyro rider can easily outdistance even the evil one. Pity that, owing to its comparative expense, the wheel must figure as being at most only an exceptional boon! And yet the one or more machines that you may be able to donate annually can have, on each of your hopefuls, at least the effect of setting him day-dreaming beforehand of his coming (?) bicycle-ownership. This is already a gain, for assuredly boys day-dream, and only too often of things much less to their advantage.

Moral protection, more than might first be thought, goes with mere spectatorship at shows and public games. Provide a lad with a ticket admitting to the field of baseball or athletics and he is safe enough for at least an afternoon. But another, and even richer, result follows: it is contributory to the work already advocated, of purifying youthful conversations. This favored inspector of

wondrous doings, returning from his observation heights on the "bleachers" to associate with chums whose best have been but fence-hole glimpses, is become a fully recognized authority on the events of the day. Your baseball ticket will, then, have created an enthusiastic young reporter, who for some little time can be trusted to guide street-corner gossip clear of the channels of sin.

Aside, then, from their recruiting efficiency gifts serve as antidotes to temptation and of course, when somewhat generously supplied, accomplish that service on quite a large scale. Accordingly, if one is a believer in the gospel of spiritual safety derived from innocent occupation, his faith may very easily inspire the good work of bidding for juvenile favor by ample donations of material means for juvenile sports.

## SECTION II—BOYISH IDEAS SHOULD DIRECT PRIZE DISTRIBUTIONS

Let us now adopt an ultra-practical turn, and consider the work of actually placing favors. A first question that arises is this:—How can the fraternity's windfalls be satisfactorily scattered among a clamorous multitude of would-be recipients? The query is answerable by only a choice between two methods. Articles must be either distributed by lot, or else presented in equal shares to all the boys in turn.

But the latter system will, I believe, invariably prove a failure. Attempts at providing evenly for everybody are likely to breed discontent among lads belonging to a class well represented in all ages and conditions of life. They are individuals who can never receive as much as will free them from the

fancy that others are receiving more. To this drawback must be added a still greater one; it is, that, to young gentlemen in their teens, a mere turn about reception of little donations, identical in kind or value, would seem very tame and the proper thing for only goody-goody little children.

Clearly, then, the better method of distributing things is by the conspicuously impartial and sufficiently exciting "raffle," which, as constant toss-ups in juvenile circles show, is the boys' own. "Prizes" delivered by this process go very far; they bestow, in advance, a thrill of ownership on nearly every lad concerned. This desirable result is due to a sanguine confidence which warms the average boy and moves him to appropriate, by anticipation, everything that has the slightest chance of ever reaching his hands.

If, for example, to each of three hundred lads you are going to simply give one baseball, every client calmly feels himself about to be favored by just that one little benefaction, and nothing more. But if you will place before the three hundred followers only fifty baseballs, to be distributed according to the whims of Dame Fortune, a very different vision arises before each. Then everybody becomes, so to speak, the prospective sole owner of pretty much the entire fifty prizes, and, as such, finds it really hard to contain himself.

Moreover, interest in any prize of considerable value, such as a bicycle, can be grandly spun out by issuing numerous checks as lottery chances on the article in question. Obviously, these checks will themselves serve as prizes, and can be distributed on successive occasions to lucky members. But care

must be taken, of course, that the checks attaching to any one article be not so multiplied as to become of depreciated worth. Thus, on a gift valued at twenty-five dollars, I would issue not more than two hundred and fifty checks, each of which will then retain the market value of one dime.

So by all means let our young friends have their "raffle"; in a matter of this kind, whatever *modus agendi* suits them and works no moral harm is one with which the rest of the world should try to be content.

### SECTION III—AN "UNEARNED INCREMENT" IN THE JUNIOR COMMONWEALTH

It ought, however, to be taken into account that with gifts going by lot, some drawers, even without for a moment doubting the fairness of proceedings, will probably become disgruntled. They are individuals who are luckless and of too narrow a caliber to bear cheerfully the contrast of their own empty-handed misery with the shining affluence of conspicuously fortunate companions.

The sayings and doings of these youngsters might sometimes fill quite a teapot with echoes of the tempest raised by many of our moneyless would-be rich against those who live in plenty. Occasionally, jealousy will move the ill-starred malcontents to renounce membership altogether. If so, I would prefer to suffer their loss rather than adopt the only remedial measure applicable to the case. This cure, much more hurtful than the disease, would consist in limiting the number of articles that any member may win. Now, in the boys' society, more easily even than in human society at



large, disaster may follow from restrictions on the accumulation by individuals of earthly goods.

Not to mention other threatening unhappy results, some lads, on acquiring the legalized amount of wealth, would, if only for the fun of the thing, immediately withdraw from the ranks. Many a young fellow, with more sense of humor than of proprieties, is able to find great sport in posing as one who has quit the fraternity after having "worked it for all it was worth." Now it is unfortunate but true that a single practical joker who, by this or any other means, draws the laugh on the organization can thereby do the latter great harm. Boys, like other mortals, do not thoroughly respect anything that lies open to ridicule; and, unlike some older mortals, they will hardly hold to what they do not really respect.

Hence, in this and in every other detail, I would endure some pounds of complaint rather than an ounce of ridicule. It is better to suffer the desertion of several ill-tempered lads, who really dignify the organization by making it worthy of their ire, than to give even one lively youngster the chance of making jest at the society's sore expense.

SECTION IV—WHEN SHOULD WINDFALLS BE DISTRIBUTED? WITH WHAT ASSISTANCE?  
HOW OFTEN?

Since gift-making should, like every other material favor, be directed to the encouragement of the society's religious meetings and other pious doings, presents are as a rule best applied not in vacation time, but during the season in which religious assemblies are held.

Moreover, *absens heres non erit*. It will usually be found necessary to award under the ruling that chances for "prizes" go only to members who are faithful in attendance at spiritual exercises. I would, however, recommend a liberal interpretation of this law: if the young Christian, after much absence, has been present at only the last religious evening session he should be judged "faithful" as regards the matter now in view.<sup>1</sup>

This arrangement, while really linking little earthly benefactions with devout doings, by no means implies that the former should have any extensive material connection with the latter. Quite the reverse. Gifts ought never be allowed to appear at pious gatherings, nor should they, more than is strictly necessary, be even mentioned therein.

The drawing of "prizes," if held in the presence of many boys, can hardly be conducted in an orderly manner; for this reason, in societies that are at all large, the proceeding should, as a rule, occur in quasi-privacy. But, here, we encounter a new difficulty. Distributions conducted behind closed doors can easily beget in the minds of unsuccessful members a suspicion that things are really going, not by chance and promiscuously to the crowd, but through secret, devious arrangement to a favored few.

Now, the only effectual check that can be placed on this suspicion is the director's reputation for impartiality which has been considered on a forward

<sup>1</sup>Readers must not imagine, from this concession, that the writer at all surrenders to the difficulty found in securing a fair attendance of juveniles at their religious meetings. On the contrary, very cheering views on this subject are advanced further on.

page. But, since the leader's good name for fairness is here put to the severest test, I would counsel him to never let the drawings occur in absolute privacy, and to give them in their beginnings some approach to publicity. He can, at first, invite a manageable few of his followers to be present at the "raffle," the workings of which they are asked to explain to the rest. Later, with absolute confidence established, he will naturally limit the ordinary witnesses to the two or three chief helpers commonly associated with himself in caring for the society's affairs. Timed by the above considerations, drawings will usually occur most conveniently just after the adjournment of religious meetings; for these meetings supply both the attendance data on which distributions are to be based, and the presence of the officers with whose assistance the distributions are to be made.

And, supposing that one enjoys means wherewith to offer prizes freely, how often should they appear on the society's program? This question receives some sort of an answer through the warning that gift distributions, since they more easily than other attractions take on appearance of purchasing membership, should not be overdone. And while it is impossible to fix their due limit of operation with precision, we may safely conclude that prize affairs should be held, at most, less than half as often as the religious meetings which prizes are designed to support.

#### SECTION V—RAPID DRAWINGS

When several objects are to be distributed among a considerable number of lads, their allot-

ment simple as it first appears can, if awkwardly planned, become quite a task; and the writer, a former victim to this uncalled-for labor, would lift its burden from others. Besides, a leading purpose of the present undertaking is to show that the care of boys need not demand any great expenditure of time. Hence, even such a small affair as a three-minute process for "raffling" gifts is consistently proposed.

The only instruments required for this proceeding are the books that record attendance at religious meetings. They are used as follows: Begin by choosing (by lot, of course, and by means of the attendance books), from among all the members marked present at the last meeting, one lucky fellow who will be the first winner and whose name, as will be seen a little later, is to serve as starting point in the determination of the rest of the winners. This pioneer prize-taker will be chosen by the three drawings now to be explained.

First Drawing.—From the entire collection of attendance books a single book is taken. This "lucky" record indicates several pews (or benches), which are then subjected to the

Second Drawing.—From the above pews (those indicated by the "lucky" book) a single pew is chosen. This, the "lucky," pew is found to be occupied, let us suppose, by several hopefuls marked present at the last meeting; the same lads are next submitted to the

Third Drawing.—From the above members (having places in the "lucky" pew and, besides, marked present at the last meeting) a single member is picked out.

This "lucky" youth becomes the first prize-winner, on whose cardinal name the rest of the distribution is to depend.

Now since this opening choice, which is to determine the rest, has been made by chance, our next and final move, though of itself wholly apart from lottery methods, will be none the less under the tutelage of chance. This step consists of accepting, as additional winners, boys marked "present" at the last gathering and whose names follow in the books that of the lucky pioneer just found.

However, while this is being done, care must be taken that the largesses be scattered with some evenness over the entire assembly of members, and not confined, with a suggestion of favoritism, to some one group, *i.e.*, to a set of chaps named conjointly in the attendance record and consequently seated together in a particular corner of the church or other place of meeting. For the purpose of obviating this mishap, have it fully understood before the lottery begins that plums will fall to qualified lads, not just as their names stand in unbroken succession to the name of the pioneer winner, but with skips determined in advance; *e.g.*, to every fifth qualified lad following the pioneer.

In determining the number of otherwise eligible names to be passed at each of these skips, one will, of course, take into account both the quantity of gifts to be assigned and the total of members entitled to draw. It is by comparing these data that the leader so calculates as to scatter his prizes here and there over the entire collection of possible recipients. If, for example, twenty "prizes" are to be distributed among two hundred youngsters com-



mended by faithful attendance, every tenth name following that of the first prize-taker should be accepted as that of a winner. Were only ten prizes to be placed with the same two hundred lads, every twentieth would be made a recipient, and so on.

And, while sufficiently diffusing the fall of sodality manna, this arrangement amply fulfils, besides, the promise made for it of permitting the manna to be showered quickly. Not more than a minute or so is demanded for the discovery of the first winner and, once that happily-starred individual is found, the other recipients are determined just as fast as their names can be read and copied.

#### SECTION VI—FINAL PROCEEDINGS


When all of fortune's new favorites are known, it becomes necessary to send them word of their good luck. This is best done by means of printed post-card forms, which the secretaries fill out and address. Blanks somewhat like the following may be found useful.

(NAME OF THE SOCIETY.)

(NAME OF THE TOWN.)

***Dear Friend:***

***Please call at the Priests' House and  
receive a..... It can be given to  
no one but yourself. The best time for calls is 7.15 P.M.***

 ***Wear your badge and present this card.***

***SECRETARY.<sup>1</sup>***

<sup>1</sup>In making up blank notices it is quite as well to place the

The efficacy of donations to bring about desirable personal interviews with our junior friends is emphasized by the fact that the recipient is usually so obliging as to arrive, not alone, but attended by his chums. This accompaniment results from the modified socialism prevailing in juvenile circles, whereby whatever falls to an individual is eagerly claimed by his "crowd." Accordingly, while baiting with gifts, the apostolic angler is in unheard of advantage over others of the craft; he can bring up several fish at a bite.

On a foregoing page I have proposed as contributory to the patron's proper standing that when visited by prize-winners he deliver to his callers, not the objects won, but certificates for the same to be honored at some business place where, of course, necessary arrangements have been made beforehand. This plan now deserves further recommendation based on the following reasons. It consults the director's convenience; sodality presents (baseball bats, for example) are sometimes a little bulky for ease in either storage or handling. And then there is an economical consideration; to a boy claimant the prize seems all the more satisfactory when received at a flourishing store. There along with the passage of a single article from the well-stocked shelves into his hands, he experiences the pleasing fancy that all of the other articles on the shelves are likely to follow suit.

Lastly we can here apply earlier views concerning the advantages of making all possible public

word "secretary" instead of the usual arrangements for the secretary's signature. That functionary soon tires of the glory of attaching his name to society matter when the same is of a kind to multiply indefinitely.

display of society doings. The prize-winner, finding that his certificate obtains prompt recognition and attention from the management of some much advertised and patronized commercial establishment, is thereby warmed to his seemingly influential fraternity. Accordingly, as the curtain drops on our happy young friend we will gladly note that, while the society's gift strains his pocket, society pride swells his heart.

#### SECTION VII—UTILIZING PIOUS ARTICLES

It would of course be a most happy circumstance if the gifts bestowed in order to promote the growth of the society could consist largely of pious articles, especially beads and scapulars, serviceable for the practice of religion; unfortunately, however, such objects, if of little material value, appeal to the common run of boys only at their better moments and with no marked force even then.

But the inability of the products of the Catholic sales counter to do much toward the enlargement of the organization does not prevent them, with proper manipulation, from accomplishing a great deal for those who are already members. This laudable purpose will be gained, for instance, by a general distribution of scapulars (enrolments being made if necessary) opportunely occurring at the opening of the swimming season. Neptune's Catholic young friends are one and all willing enough to have the Blessed Virgin on their side. However, apart from the foregoing and kindred special occasions, all around presentations of pious articles would seem somewhat hazardous as afford-

ing a number of the intended recipients an opportunity for parading their indifference to the gift.

Sensitiveness to this result may suggest that such objects be simply held in readiness for free delivery on call. But here again human nature is able to create an impediment. Nearly every youngster finds considerable repugnance to making a direct request for anything receivable gratis, nor is he wholly relieved by the fact that the article sought for is announced to be given away to all petitioners; it is exactly the making of the petition that causes embarrassment. Were the visitor calling simply to receive something already declared his own by no matter what title, the case would be different. To be sure, when goods in the temporal order are offered this reluctance is triumphantly routed; but let us not imagine that unfailing readiness to conquer self for one's own gain in this world is going to be matched by equal violence to self for one's own gain in the faraway world to come.

For the reason just explained, I would usually encourage the acquirement of religious materials, not by holding them as gifts, but by placing their distribution on something of a business basis. The plan requires arrangements with some conveniently located storekeeper from whom the members, on presenting a card, can have at least a pair of beads or brown scapulars at, say, half price. Whenever this way of doing may be tried it will be seen, I believe, that the above helps to holiness reach the intended hands much more freely through "bargain" purchases than by out and out donations.

Moreover, traffic being restricted in this instance to pious articles demanding *sua natura* honest handling, the youthful buyers can be trusted to act on the understanding that the reduced cost is in favor of themselves alone, and not to promote sales to other parties whom the buyers might approach with financial profit.



## CHAPTER VII

### TORCHLIGHT PARADES

#### SECTION I—COMPARABLE TO THE CADET DRILL

THE fact that the writer has never attempted to interest parish boys in military work and can not make any suggestions regarding that feature does not prevent him from adding tribute to its physical and moral helpfulness. And meanwhile he will be permitted to treat of a turn-out that he has often managed and which to some may seem an excellent makeshift substitute for early soldiering, the torchlight parade.

To be sure this diversion is one that provides no training for body nor for mind and consequently no rivalry with the higher functions of youthful military doings; nevertheless, considered as a mere attraction, it easily approaches the latter. Indeed, many boys are far more readily won by the illuminated procession than by the regular "profession" of arms. These recruits are youngsters of a somewhat careless and indolent turn, who could hardly be induced to bear the discipline and training inseparable from amateur soldier life.

The night turnout, which will certainly be of infrequent occurrence, should probably not be undertaken oftener than once a year; nevertheless the torches, even during the months of their total extinction, will not fail to throw light upon the society's admission gates. And it is a happy circum-

stance that the event is naturally more or less identified with cool, starry autumn weather. Accordingly, the procession can become an annual fall outing, and as such will grandly reunite and enthuse the members after their summer vacation from society affairs.

## SECTION II—ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGES

A second gain found in this legalized and sufficiently controlled outburst of flame-bearers is its efficiency, rivaling even that of the military feature, in bringing our young friends prominently before the public.

Boys, let me say anew, respect their organization all the more when people talk of its doings. Hence the members of a juvenile union unconsciously derive no end of lasting encouragement from filling the streets with the blaze and cheer of a display which excites favorable and general comment and which, to the enthusiastic participants, is rated as nothing less than the locality's spectacular triumph. This view was once forcibly presented by some newsboys, members of the writer's sodality, gathered during a moment of business depression at a street corner rendezvous. "De men's p'litical p'rades ain't in it wid us," exclaimed one of the group, "fer de republicans is small widout de dem'crats, an' de dem'crats ain't much better alone." "Dat's rite," cried another, "wese de peeple; our crowd gits every dem'crat, and every republican, besides de hull of de fellers wot's on de fence."

Nor is the high estimate which juveniles easily

form concerning their display by any means groundless. Fairness to my subject demands the statement that this procession, even when got up after a very primitive fashion, really pleases adult spectators. Even the drawbacks to be mentioned below do not endanger the leading features of the affair. The parade can not fail of displaying sparkling, cheering lines of exuberant youth in all the natural grace of boyish movement, and this charm, even if unaided, will always avail to win the night.

Lastly, the torchlight procession can be recommended on the grounds of economy and practicability. It requires no uniforms and no shoulder-pieces other than the old-fashioned and comparatively inexpensive articles after which it is named. Modern Greek-fire candles for general use are wholly out of question. In the boys' parade it will not suffice that illuminants are provided for merely a certain number of those in line; there must be one for each and every participant; but Greek-fire candles, enough to go fully around during an entire evening, would involve an absurd expense. Then again, drippings from the latter articles burn hands and wearing apparel, while tin torches without failing to throw plenty of light do not offer this inconvenience. Of course the little oil cans sometimes spring a leak; but, as most people know, kerosene does not in the least injure clothing.

Neither does the evening procession demand any kind of preparatory drill. Little more should be done than to have the paraders form two files, one on each side of the street. When the music strikes up all keep step—in fact, can not help it—and fa-

vored by this modicum of regularity the column-movement takes on as much precision as need be cared for.

### SECTION III—DIFFICULTIES

It seems impossible to say otherwise than vaguely what minimum number of paraders will avail to make a satisfactory showing. This point hinges largely on the size of the community, or, to speak more accurately, on the length of the locally organized processions with which that of the boys will be compared. Fifty young torch-bearers might appear well in a village, and two hundred of them ought certainly to be voted a success anywhere outside of our very largest centers, which permit no collection of humanity to seem great unless up in the thousands.

Moreover, enthusiastic anticipations on the part of most of the boys must not be mistaken for an assurance that all will participate who can. The parades are liable to suffer the loss especially of some of the older lads, apprehensive that they will be compromised by appearing publicly with the younger fry. This sensitiveness will be somewhat eased by an arrangement parting most of the juniors (the smallest of them anyway) from the seniors.

The foregoing division proves helpful also to appearances: it guards against the grotesqueness that would be presented by youngsters of all sizes lined up together. Here again, however, rigorous discrimination is hardly called for. The spectacular effect, especially since it is planned for the night time, will not suffer greatly by some slight uneven-

ness in the physical standing of troopers who are in the same division. Accordingly, stature varieties seem sufficiently honored by the formation of two companies, respectively for lads over or under a given age—say fourteen years. And, as a trial will show, boys, without needing any pressure or watching, are fairly regular in keeping to whichever of these detachments is the one they should join.

Happily the torchlight procession is not materially deteriorated by the presence of citizens in worn-out clothing. If, as is supposed, the display occurs in the somewhat advanced fall season, ultra-negligee shirts have already yielded to the cold weather and do not appear. Besides nowadays boys over thirteen years of age, though they should be of the poorer class, rarely go about in actual tatters. And taking things at their worst, apparel that is faded, discolored, or threadbare becomes as presentable by torchlight as in photography.

These considerations should be encouraging, especially as coming from one who in the present affair is far from being easily pleased. Indeed, the writer candidly confesses never to have gathered his night prowlers for their outing without suffering something like heart-failure over the identical uncouth features that have just been belittled; but a favorable *vox populi* has ever reassured him. If, then, you are interested in evening marches, note the cheering fact that the weird dancing lights and shadows created by blazing torches throw abundant charm over a juvenile *omnium gatherum* which by day could not possibly hold its own.



## SECTION IV—FORMATION

As already stated, the paraders are best formed in two lines, one on either side of the street. It would be a mistake to place the braves four abreast; their limited numbers ought to be spread out as impressively as possible. Naturally, the society's officers will carry lanterns whereby to be distinguished from the rank and file. Most of these dignitaries can act as grand marshal and staff, and as such will, according to custom, march in a body at the column's head. This arrangement does not prevent the detail of some of the fraternity's magnates to walk between the files as captains and lieutenants of the forces.

Clearly, the turn-out will seem all the more the "real thing" if, like other parades of good standing, it moves under police escort. And here let me suggest that the ever urbane captain of your precinct be asked to provide at least a trio of bluecoats. Three or more policemen make something of a ceremonious looking squad and set off a boys' procession very well: but two officers, walking in a business-like way at the van seem bent on creating the painful suggestion that all hands have been placed under arrest.

Of course, the parade supposes a supply of energetic drummers and fifers. I would advise, that for every two hundred boys in line, a separate corps consisting, if possible, of five pieces, be provided.

As a precautionary move toward the maintenance of good order, the director prudently invites a few young men to accompany the marchers. These adults, scattered along the length of the en-

tire column, should be on hand ostensibly "for service in case of accident." In point of fact, any disciplinary action on their part will be of a quasi-accidental nature, for youngsters, while enjoying the abundant legitimate liberty of this free and easy occasion, are little tempted to misbehave.

Any elaborate attempts at ornamenting the procession give more trouble than they are worth. However, American flags are, of course, a happy feature; the more of them the better. Also it may be found entirely feasible to provide the officers with sashes of red, white, and blue bunting, and with white gloves. In order that less will have to be done the very evening of the parade, it is well, a day or so beforehand, to see that the officers are provided with the articles just named, as well as with the lanterns which complete their insignia of lofty rank.

#### SECTION V—PROTECTING THE "ACCOUTERMENTS"

Tin torches will last for years, but on condition that they be preserved from rust. Accordingly, when out of commission they should be kept in a garret or other dry place.<sup>1</sup> Their storage need not involve the slightest danger of fire. Safety of course demands that after the articles have been used, the residue of oil be emptied from the cans; and the wicks, always inflammable when once they have been saturated, should also be removed. The latter can be conveniently packed and securely

<sup>1</sup>The appendix illustrates a wooden rack designed to hold these articles. By its use the work of storing, transporting, and filling them will be much facilitated.

locked in large tin boxes. With these precautions taken, torches retain absolutely nothing that can give them an incendiary turn and are, consequently, quite as harmless as any other combinations of wood and tin.

However, thoughtful readers will find themselves reflecting that protection of these flame-holders when not in use gives much less than half an assurance of their preservation; evidently the articles must undergo a real crisis every time they are committed to the scant mercies of the boisterous paraders. People, therefore, naturally ask:—How will these comparatively frail objects be safely delivered to an undisciplined, jostling, juvenile multitude? What will they not suffer while in this reckless keeping? Can the torches be afterward recovered in sound condition; or, for that matter, can they be recovered at all?

My sufficiently favorable answer to these questions must be prefaced with the frank admission that after a boys' parade the fiery instruments thereof give ample evidence of having been abundantly paraded. Like soldiers who have suffered in a battle just fought, torches the worse for last evening's outing must be classed as killed, wounded, and missing. The dead are invariably dead out and out; only their corpselike wooden handles remain. Happily the wounded subjects, while numerous, can generally be rehabilitated. It doesn't matter that their poor tin heads are somewhat crushed or half knocked off; any surgeon-tinker can easily restore them for future campaigns.

But the missing! What a blessing that they need be very few! For it must be admitted, like

many vanishing braves of real warfare, they are likely to have found other fields of activity and are forever lost to the force.


#### SECTION VI—RES CLAMAT DOMINO

Here are some expedients that the writer has seen curtail the list of dead and missing enough to enable a collection of illuminants to survive in its practical entirety repeated attacks on the town.

First of all, let every torch be numbered; the figures should be branded into the handles and then painted white. Stencil work, which would be immediately obscured by soot, is not, in this instance, of any service.

The next step will be to provide each participant before parade night with a "torch ticket," large enough to be handled in a coming moment of excitement and something like the following:

### **TORCH TICKET.**

 This card not good, if presented in bad condition, or if the name written on it be in any way changed.

**Name of Bearer**.....

The Bearer of this Ticket will carry Torch No.....

#### **FORMATION OF COMPANIES:**

*Fall in at 7.30 P. M. sharp.*

**Company A, boys OVER 14 years of age, will form on Tenth Street, EAST of the avenue.**

**Company B, boys UNDER 14 years of age, will form on Tenth Street, WEST of the avenue.**

This precious certificate of course entitles its possessor to a coveted shadow-chaser. But before the

parader receives the card his name is clearly written thereon, and by a generous expenditure of vocal energy he is made to thoroughly feel the depth of the legend which the card bears, that unless his written name remains intact, the ticket will be invalid.

Now, when in the act of receiving his firebrand the youngster must pass in the above check to be retained by the persons who superintend operations. Moreover, the latter, on delivering a torch to the applicant, take note of its number and mark that number on the line of the applicant's card reserved for the purpose. By this proceeding, the parader obtains his shoulder-piece without the slightest delay, but meanwhile leaves with the management a written record of the exact article he has happened to carry off.

This latter circumstance exercises wonderful restraining influence over the processional enthusiast. While *en route*, he may be tempted to explode the vessel of flame and thus signalize his attainment to an extra high order of excitement; or, at the end of the march, he, perhaps, leans to an ultra-liberal theological view, making torches, like umbrellas, common property; but *gaudet tentamine virtus*. Sustained by an abiding consciousness that at headquarters the borrowed treasure is known to be in his keeping, the bearer nearly always returns it thither "safe," so to speak, and usually "sound."

Torch tickets, therefore, can enable those in charge to make a case against any lad who fails to return his portable burner, or who returns the same in bad condition; nevertheless, actual proceedings of



the kind may never be necessary. The mere fact that the numbers of torches are recorded seems to restrain boys so effectually that losses are usually not worth investigating. Save after the very first of his parades, the writer never found enough injured and missing property to justify the trouble of tracing those who were in fault.

#### SECTION VII—ARMING THE FORCES

Over and above the foregoing precautions, arrangements should be made for handling the crowd throughout the actual distribution. This care, needful anyway for the maintenance of a modicum of order, is besides a condition *sine qua non* for making sure that the torch tickets are marked with some kind of accuracy.

Now the director will hardly meet the present emergency unless mindful that his average boy—breathlessly reaching the scene half an hour too early—is equipped for operations by forgetfulness of previous instructions coupled with an innate conviction that he must secure the first torch or perish in the attempt. Evidently this lad, multiplied into a crowd, requires methodical, not to say strategic, treatment.

Begin, therefore, by assembling the throng at some distance from the objects to be delivered. If two companies are to be formed, their letters, A and B, painted on small hand-transparencies, will guide each juvenile to his appointed detachment. After mobilization has been effected, let the "troops" under all available muscular direction—police and civilian—move on the supplies. Should

this advance be made alongside a building or fence, so much the better: an alleged alignment of undisciplined youngsters is never at better advantage than when it can be pushed bodily against some such immovable object and pressed out straight.

But before the eager soldier boys can reach their arsenal we shall repair to the latter place and note the preparations made therein. The unlit flame-holders are found in a yard provided with two gates, one to be used as an entrance and the other for exit. In this yard are also located a number of tables, at each of which sits a scribe. Back of every scribe stands a torch-handler. Possibly this arrangement immediately suggests what is to be done. The handler is ready to give the arrivals their torches, and, in so doing, will call off the numbers of the torches delivered. The scribe, seated at the table, is ready to catch the numbers of torches called off by the handler, and these numbers he is going to mark on the cards the boys will present.

The influx of noisy, giddy ticket-bearers must be regulated at the entrance-gate where one or two men will admit, successively, squads of about a dozen or fifteen. Our young friends, on entering the place, are forthwith directed to the tables; they then present cards, receive torches, and pass by the exit gate into the street in as little time as it takes to tell. By this method, quite a regiment of uproarious, half-disorderly boys can be "armed" and more or less accurately recorded in something like a quarter of an hour.

It will be well to have the base of supplies kept

open while the column is *en route*. Torches will then be obtainable by working boys and others arriving late; and also, at any time while the procession is moving, they can be replaced should any parader's enthusiasm fail.

#### SECTION VIII—FROM START TO FINISH

The vociferousness, extra confusion, and general pandemonium incidental to the excitement of lighting-up and getting off, must not be permitted to create alarm; the single potent word "march" puts everything sufficiently to rights. This instantaneous evolution of quasi-orderly movement from seeming chaos was abundantly noted in the author's first and purely experimental attempt. Our distribution of lights was immediately followed by uproarious saturnalia which seemingly verified the worst fears that had been entertained. The giddy throng, ignoring instructions, swarmed hither and thither, swinging torches and creating a din that drowned all vocal guidance. Apparently, the venture was to result in only the oil-spilling, fire-scattering antics of a juvenile mob.

In desperation over this outlook the writer pounded a bass drum for attention and profited by an ensuing lull of small diameter to pull the nearest of the turbulent mass into a head which was forthwith ordered to march and did so. This success gave the situation an entirely new aspect. It was clear that, having grown a head that moved, we could not well help acquiring a tail that would also move; so leaving the latter and intermediate details of processional anatomy to work out their exist-

ence on the way, we boldly sallied forth, and—as the evening's public welcome proved—to glory.

While there is comparatively little ground for fear that the column as long as it is *in transitu* will make trouble, one is prudent in having the marchers "do" the town briefly, say within ninety minutes. Never let juveniles tire of things; in their world it is of exhausted novelty that the liveliest of mischief is born.

But, as yet, we are not fully "out of the woods." At the close of the parade torches must be replaced; and their return, like the home-coming of some flesh and blood veterans, is likely to prove more disastrous than was actual service abroad. What with boyish rudeness toward play articles no longer in demand, and an uproar that utterly drowns all attempts at vocal direction, the safe re-delivery of the instruments of the parade can only be secured by arrangements similar to the earlier ones by which these same instruments were safely loaned.

Let the procession, then, terminate at the gate of the starting place, or of some other yard which has separate means for entrance and exit. Again the paraders, as they enter the enclosure, are broken into rapidly successive squads. Within, should be stationed several adults; these, if sufficiently numerous, will easily disarm all arrivals before the latter can summon enough presence of mind to shy their encumbrances at random.

With a final catastrophe thus averted, an inventory of the torch supply can be inaugurated with confidence. Only trifling losses will appear; a few dead will have to be cremated without the honors

of war; the wounded must in larger numbers be invalided to the tin-smithery hospital; while the evening's favorable outcome in general will enable you to forget that two or three, perhaps, of the light-headed mechanisms are reported missing and will never return.



## CHAPTER VIII

### ATHLETIC SPORTS

#### SECTION I—CONCERNING BASEBALL AND OTHER STRICTLY CO-OPERATIVE GAMES

A LARGE percentage of American boys take special delight in meeting for the muscular doings of field and track. Accordingly the patron creating such gatherings is hailed as a veritable Moses under whose guidance juveniles have passed from the bondage of commonplace conditions to a new and exceedingly choice "promised land."

But most directors planning in this direction look instinctively, chiefly and, perhaps, solely to the national game. They should reflect that baseball, since it reigns chiefly during the society's summer vacation, can afford the society only lesser help. Furthermore, any sport entailing the formation of a team becomes troublesome from the fact that the players soon clamor for the services of non-members of dazzling skill and lose heart unless—in direct antagonism to the fraternity's interests—these outsiders are allowed right of way.

And, finally, the doings of the diamond may prove of comparatively slight assistance to the leader aiming, as in any populous locality he ought, at securing followers in large numbers. The club attracts only a few. Not more than nine players can don the uniforms, and the auxiliary group of substitutes and satellites will hardly be more than

as many again. City boys, organized by the whole-sale and meeting, at most, once a week, conceive very little of the *esprit de corps* which owing to closer companionship is so easily developed at school; accordingly, the non-playing large majority of the fraternity take, ordinarily, little interest in the fraternity's team on which they have no place.

It is not, however, to be thought that the writer would discourage any one so inclined from utilizing baseball. On the contrary, the diversion always exerts a real, even if limited drawing power, which is not to be despised. Besides, while the sport, considered as a recreation, accomplishes less, it may, by its successful issue and as a source of prestige, accomplish more. If, notwithstanding certain unavoidable stumbling-blocks—fortnightly conflicts for the captainship, weekly desertions, and daily dissensions of players—the nine contrives to secure local juvenile championship, it then warms the pride of even non-players and becomes a real power in the union's behalf. Furthermore, baseball triumphs help the society to be talked about by grown people; and, as elsewhere maintained, juvenile members are much encouraged when their society stock is conversationally advanced.

The remaining co-operative games, football and basket-ball, though happily timed to occur side by side with sodality activity, are in other respects subject to the drawbacks just noted.

## SECTION II—GENERAL ATHLETICS MORE HELPFUL

In consequence I would preferably rely on the ordinary field sports. These contests, held out of

doors, are happily available during the sodality's spring and fall seasons and, under favor of an armory or other fit building, can be utilized during the religiously busy winter.

Furthermore, general athletics, even amidst the rivalries of contending associations, permit the participants belonging to any particular body to stand pretty much each boy for himself. Hence these contests breed in participants comparatively little of the strong temptation, created by strictly co-operative games, to plead for "new blood" from without.

Besides, miscellaneous sports, if conducted with attention to variety and to the interests of both the older and the younger boys, open up a gladly accepted field for many and can therefore be trusted to attract youngsters from the four winds. Provide, then, opportunities for the largest possible number of runners, jumpers, vaulters, etc.; by so doing you bring a lot of lads running, jumping, vaulting, etc., into your organization.

In default of better facilities, general athletics can do fairly well in some private or semi-private place, *e.g.*, a school-yard or trafficless side street; but meanwhile the contests naturally claim grounds ample enough for the crowning triumph of securing large and appreciative spectatorship. Obviously, lookers-on are all important, both to the success of the games and to the ulterior object which we have in view. Adult spectators give proceedings a much higher standing before the boys; and it goes without saying that the youngsters themselves are needed in full force. Blessed, indeed, is the field day when the less energetic, com-

paratively inactive, and strenuously lazy lads, all of whom are material for religious organizations, are, without exception, on hand to hold hats and coats, to keep tallies, and to "root."

It is also to be noted that miscellaneous sports, if so well attended as to take the form of an out-and-out public field day, become a very efficacious advertisement. The games then draw notice, and reinforce the general hurrah, thereby doing much toward the union's secular standing that the writer finds essential to notable success.

### SECTION III—A FEW PRACTICAL HINTS

With differences of locality the tone of athletic meets can vary widely. Wherever such affairs have acquired the footing usually obtained by them in large towns, all details must be transacted dignifiedly and by rule; participants have to appear in conventional costume; the program, given little or not at all to comic features, is carried out by adult amateur officials (always most willing to take charge), and finally the prizes consist, necessarily, of medals or other very presentable objects.

However, no rural or quasi-rural worker should for a moment imagine himself obliged to keep this pace. On the contrary his world, as being wholly free from fixed athletic rule, is one in which neither contestants nor spectators will lose any interest in muscular deeds because done by wearers of everyday raiment, or because for the most part of a mirth-provoking kind. Indeed, as an uproarious finale, proprieties, as commonly understood, may be completely set at naught by inviting the more en-

thusiastic competitors to try the greasy pole, or by permitting all hands to cope with the greased pig—a creature sure to prove one of the leading athletes of the occasion.

Naturally enough success for the day demands a prize-laden goal; but, fortunately, boys free from the influence of conventionality are ostrichlike regarding trophies, and take to themselves every odd thing of a reward that comes in their way. This omnivorous appetite greatly facilitates things. The worker who may be quite unable to secure tasteful medals, etc., suitable to adult athletes, easily secures, through the kindness of local dealers and others, enough miscellaneous commonplace gifts to stir numerous limbs that enjoy the mobility of early youth.<sup>1</sup> Besides, it is not always necessary that every winner should actually secure some reward. Victors will be content to receive checks entitling them to chances on prizes of superior worth and the athletic gatherings can be followed by a grand drawing for the same.

The priestly friend of boys will be mindful that these pages by no means solicit his direct management of such an affair as the field day: on the contrary, let him feel that he can with the utmost confidence cultivate the reserve recommended in an earlier chapter. The clerical director is not even obliged to know anything concerning the ins and outs of sports, but merely to know others who do. Having seen that all preliminaries are arranged, he

<sup>1</sup>Some of the articles the writer has seen gladly accepted under the above circumstances were chickens, turkeys, soda water, candies, pies, peanuts, apples, potatoes, etc., as well as hats, neckties, shoes, umbrellas, and even a barber's donation of half a dozen "hair cuts."



temporarily abdicates in favor of lay officials much better fitted than himself to preside over actual contests. Nevertheless, until the last victor is cheered, the organizer stays on the scene. And he should never remain merely as a spectator but always as one whose advice on important side issues quietly assists the managers, and whose presence is the best guarantee of sufficiently orderly proceedings on the part of the youthful throng.

Moreover, the preliminaries to which the director will, perforce, have given some earlier attention, and in private, are not such as to involve notable expenditure of time. The "paraphernalia" which, of course, one must make sure of providing, is exceedingly limited and primitive. Indeed, it is by contemplating the few and uncouth requisites for a grand athletic occasion, that observers best realize how much innocent amusement and display youthful human nature can derive from its own muscles and nerves. These auxiliary articles are chiefly, the jump-stand (which is the only presentable bit of apparatus in the collection) and vaulting pole; an 8-pound shot; a tug-of-war rope; some empty flour-barrels, perhaps; a number of old sacks, and a few potatoes.

## CHAPTER IX

### BADGES:—SUIT THEM TO THE WEARERS

#### SECTION I—BOYS AND BUTTONS

THE emblems here considered are of religious or semi-religious character; designed, however, not for church use, but to be worn in every-day life.

Since we ought to take juveniles by juvenile ways, it seems really surprising that some organizers fail to provide their followers with a society button.<sup>1</sup> Every-day street life shows that boys are, *par excellence*, emblem bearers; why not, then, offer them the attraction of a badge peculiar to their pious association? Moreover, through methods such as are to be described below, youngsters can certainly be induced to wear their "union label" about town both freely and perseveringly. Now the button, pushed thus into general notice, contributes largely to that secular prominence on the part of the society which has been so strongly advocated.

The well-established emblem, while occasionally loafing a bit or indulging in craps-play and episodes of belligerent character, ostentatiously at-

<sup>1</sup>It should be really a button, in the sense of having a button-back. This arrangement helps to secure from juveniles the respectful treatment due to an object possessed of more or less religious meaning. Boys' badges with pin-backs have a weakness for settling down undignifiedly on caps, suspenders, etc., but the button-back badge necessarily claims an eminently respectable resting place.

tends school, carries bundles, sells papers, shines shoes, escorts parades, runs to fires, permeates street excitements, and, in fact, actively enters into every local department, until the bearers of the decoration come to regard its ubiquitous activity as proof positive that their association is of importance almost aldermanic.

In addition to this helpfulness in furthering the society's prestige, a religious mark, commonly worn in public, directly and powerfully promotes Catholic spirit in the lads by whom the mark is displayed. It secures a continuous manly profession of faith, nearly as open and conspicuous as if all hands were to follow the cross in a daily street procession.

Indeed, our young friends may sometimes be led to make their denominational button the occasion of muscular polemics not contemplated by the fraternity's management. "Do Protestant lads ever ask the meaning of your badge?" was the question once put to a street-boy friend of mine. "Yep," answered the youngster, "sometimes dey wanter know." "Then what explanation do you give them?" continued the inquirer. "Oh," replied our rough and ready tyro controversialist, instinctively and realistically bunching his fist, "I jis' haul off and soak 'em."

## SECTION II—POPULAR BUTTONS VERSUS ARTISTIC ONES

The writer, having nailed to his masthead the principle that our town juniors should be taught religion and morality rather than æsthetics, may

consistently plead that the fraternity's badge is sufficiently presentable, if only in accord with uncultivated boyish taste. Now it is clear that city juveniles, taken just as they come from the various sidewalks of life, are very feebly endowed with artistic sense; to them art is merely chalk-work on fences, and high art is but chalk-work on high fences. Far, then, from offering town-trotters a petite, dainty badge that might seem the inanimate missionary of refinement, I would equip them with an ample and somewhat flashy article, "loud" enough to suit their crude likings.

Let us enter a little into details. First of all, the emblem bidding for high favor in rather low places ought to revel in an abundance of red. This color, intimately associated with sheriff's sales as well as with railroad smash-ups and other thrilling events, is by far the most adventurous tenant of the spectrum and, therefore, may be plausibly considered the boys' favorite. But my preference enjoys further support from the fact that the red, more than other hues, catches the eye. This is a great recommendation with our young friends, who estimate the worth of their button, less from its excellence in design and color blending than by the distance from which it can be seen.

The power of red to fix attention should also be considered in its effect on even the adult public. Give the juvenile throng decorations of subdued tone, and the bearers of such ornaments will, perhaps, gain very little of the public notice they could so advantageously receive; but deck the youngsters out in crimson-like badges and, collectively emula-

ting the rainbow, they will claim the observation of all.

Now, since the first of our national colors is so helpful, why not combine it in the present instance with the two remaining ones and thereby consult both popularity for the button, and patriotism in its bearers? Moreover, by this selection, piety can be directly stimulated as much as love of country. Our hearers will profit greatly by a frequently repeated word on the spiritual meaning that attaches to "the red, white, and blue." They can be most profitably reminded that, hundreds of years before our flag was known and from the days of St. Felix de Valois, these three colors were worn by his Order for the Redemption of Captives as symbols of Faith unto crimson bloodshed; of Hope soaring above the terrestrial azure; and of Charity, uniting with the sister virtues to clothe happy souls in spiritual robes of spotless white.

The size, also, of the boys' emblem has a bearing on its popularity. One called upon to choose in this matter, and who would be secure from mistake, must be mindful that *parum pro nihilo reputatur* is a first principle in all juvenile decorative proceedings. Consequently, if things ornamental are to suit the every-day youngster, they must be big.

This demand for spectacular dimensions seems to be inversely proportional to the size of the party to be arrayed. At eight or nine years, our little man would prefer a badge of sunflower diameter; and he gradually learns to accept something smaller more out of concession to the taste of adults than owing to any change of his own. By a sort of instinctive compromise, lads in their earlier teens



have halted at the exact circumference of a silver quarter; this with an unanimity that extends throughout the land and forbids any attempt at further reduction. Meanwhile, however, young fellows approaching seventeen must have a more diminutive emblem, and in the writer's organization an article sized to suit this demand figures as the highest grade of the multiple button about to be explained.

### SECTION III—YOUTHFUL "OLD AGE" ON ITS DIGNITY

Differences of years, which are forever making trouble in work for boys, chiefly impede the adoption of any strictly uniform design by all members of a society. Older youths scorn to share the identical "tagging" of smaller companions. Owing to this objection, a button will hardly enjoy general patronage unless it appears in two or more varieties. These may retain the same general features but in details they must part company in such a way as to denote the senior or junior standing of the bearers.

It is fortunate that the feeling here noted is not such as to call for wholly independent badges and so destroy decorative unity, but is quieted with a very slight difference in designs, especially when some inequality of diameters is added. In fact most people, probably, will be surprised that, in such a matter, every-day boys are prepared to notice lesser variations enough to soothe their susceptibilities. Evidence of this encouraging readiness, though somewhat belated, was supplied in

time to save my own first experiment in the affair now before us.

I had begun a trial, which placed only two buttons in commission, with grave misgivings as to the outcome; there certainly seemed little likelihood that the careless youngsters concerned would find the trifling changes of the emblems sufficiently distinctive. Following events appeared to confirm this apprehension; and discouraged by the results of what was really an imperfect test, I was about to relinquish further effort. Just then a leader among the roughest and most neglected youngsters of the locality intervened to save the enterprise. He came to me in the very brightest halo of honesty (its most magnificent setting is in juvenile rags) to return a sodality ornament picked up in the street.

"Keep the find for your own use, Mat," said the writer. "But, Father," replied the lad, "it's no use to me, 'tain't for my grade." And, thus, Mat in his uprightness aided the cause of buttons far more than he knew; for, unconsciously, the lad inspired his patron with courage to give their plural use a more extended trial. Excellent results finally appeared. Indeed, after a little, two forms of the badges seemed insufficient and a third was added.

Our present use of the multiple decoration is as follows: A newcomer receiving, of course, the lowest form is allowed the next higher variety on having made his first year. However, the latter achievement does not consist of twelve months of membership finished, but materializes with the mere ending of the sodality year in which the freshman has been enrolled. Accordingly, when we

open up in September, recruits who entered during the preceding fall and recruits who joined at the very eve of the summer vacation just over are held as having had equal success in weathering their first year and establishing a claim on the corresponding superior badge. To be sure such indiscriminate promotion could not possibly be tolerated in other departments of life, but it creates no feeling whatever among boys and meanwhile renders immense service by obviating necessarily burdensome investigations of individual membership records.

The second emblem, having been thus preserved from discreditable connection with lesser humanity, easily retains favor with the post-freshman until these begin to mount the pedestal of recognized authority. Appearance on the appointment list, the stepping-stone to high places, entitles the coming magnate to the "officers' button" which comforts his declining days of society life.

#### SECTION IV—"BUSINESS IS BUSINESS"

There can be no doubt that emblems gain much prestige by a requirement that the members shall pay for them. Young people of all others are the ones to hold things in all the greater esteem for having secured them at a sacrifice of cash. To tyro investors "money is power" that gathers in treasures not merely, as older folks understand, when well directed; but always and through native inerrancy. Accordingly, they account every purchase as certainly precious because of the infallibly efficacious pocket-capital the purchase represents.

The helpful plan of disposing of badges for a few pennies each does not, of course, forbid that varieties indicating superior standing in the society should command a few pennies more. Indeed, when a multiple decoration is in use, an ascending scale of prices is absolutely necessary; otherwise, in the minds of the boys, the different forms of the emblem could never fully express the rising dignity of the sodality grades they designate.

Happily the financial tribute sufficing to enhance these decorations is not such as to interfere in the least with their desirably extensive use. Meanwhile, in order to facilitate business transactions necessitated by growth in dignity, I would keep the rule that whenever anybody is possessed of a button of lower degree, the article, even if badly used up, is to be accepted at its full original value, in part payment for any superior emblem that the owner's new and higher rank may oblige him to buy.

## CHAPTER X

### BADGES:—ENCOURAGE THEIR USE

#### SECTION I—STIMULATING DISPLAY

It is exceedingly regrettable that most workers really seem not to appreciate the important results obtainable through a common external mark of enrolment. They act as if the badge could serve as merely some kind of a society reminder or keepsake to be cherished by those who so wish; whereas it ought really to be regarded as a means of publicly and permanently setting off the entire fraternity.

Owing to this shortsightedness, emblems are often simply scattered broadcast among the members and then wholly abandoned to the mercy of juvenile whims. Unfortunately, the enthusiasm with which these ornaments are first greeted is very far from establishing them in lasting honor on the coats of the fickle recipients. For a few days, every boy is so happy in having his button! After some weeks, every button would be so happy to have its boy!

Now, it is only speaking from what I have seen to assert that, with proper means taken, the badge can be engrafted so generally on the members as to contribute abundantly to the advertising and invigorating effect which should be constantly ambitioned. However, it is not claimed that every boy can be induced to wear the emblem at all times. Few owners of two coats will be so loyal to the fraternity as to place its mark on both; and even the



numerous possessor of a single suit is often careless or indifferent about making the decoration a part of his portable wardrobe.

Moreover, during the swimming season, buttons are often condemned to home obscurity and "for cause." Otherwise, the owners could not enjoy their daily splash without risking the appropriation of these articles by even the care-takers "minding" the clothes. But, while numerous such failures must be patiently endured, a majority of the members can certainly be induced to wear the badge habitually during as many years as their organization may last.

Every thoughtful person will perceive that this very desirable result can be obtained only at the price of careful management. First of all, open display of the association's emblem should be made a *sine qua non* condition for securing the material benefits flowing from the association itself; any member appearing before the director for a prize, in the library for a book, at the entertainment door for a seat, etc., should find himself, unless duly labeled, a *persona non grata*.

Naturally enough, youthful ingenuity is at once occupied in circumventing legislation of this kind. Let us suppose, for example, an amusement gathering into which no lad will be admitted unless he displays the sodality badge. A party of chums reach the entrance. All of them are genuine members, but the fraternity decoration makes a poor showing in their midst. Indeed it is worn by only one of the number, Master A; and this fortunate individual, leaving his associates at the door, enters the rendezvous. Once within, however, he busies

himself borrowing a lot of badges which, carried outside, are promptly distributed among those of the party in waiting. Whereupon A's chums, B, C, D, & Co.—half of the alphabet perhaps—being now up to requirements promptly go in out of the cold.<sup>1</sup>

But, even were such tricks to pass unchecked, the mere fact that the emblem must sometimes be shown is wonderfully potential in causing it to be appreciated and well cared for. For, after all, when a "good thing" is to be gained boys are not overfond of trusting their chances to other boys or other boys' buttons and must have whatever is needful that they may do by themselves.

## SECTION II—FURTHER LEGISLATION

However, the expedient just described, while very helpful toward securing extensive public use of the badge, is by no means of such efficacy that, applied all alone, it can score a complete triumph. Many youngsters, while purchasing and profoundly respecting the emblem for its talismanic power, will hardly wear the article save when its talismanic functions are in active play.

The organizer must, then, think out additional measures whereby the decoration may be kept in display. I recommend, chief among these, a sweeping, autocratic, and absolutely irrevocable decree—which, because non-enforceable, should be all the more solemnly promulgated and untiringly reiter-

<sup>1</sup>Of course, when it seems worth while, one can usually upset little schemes of the above type. This result will be accomplished in the present instance by requiring for admission, not only display of the badge, but also the ordinary formality of delivering a ticket.

ated—that, under no matter what circumstances, members are strictly prohibited from carrying badges in their pockets and are rigorously enjoined to always wear the same securely fastened to their coats.

The button is at great advantage when rescued from the pocket, for then it is very likely to be worn. Besides, whatever goes into the receptacle just mentioned must closely associate with the knife and the match—the two agencies on which youthful endeavor chiefly relies for the disintegration of things in general. Sooner or later, therefore, this art treasure, if pocketed, will suffer annihilation through the violence of its destructive neighbors.

Neither is the little ornament a bit safer in its proper place, the button-hole, if left there without being firmly attached to surroundings. If thus neglected, the first wrestling match or climbing escapade will carry it to the sidewalk and thence into the gutter. The members should, therefore, be forever urged to keep themselves in readiness for occasions by always having the potent emblems securely fastened to their apparel. This result they will certainly accomplish admirably, whenever induced to go at it, personally, with needle and thread.

For, as occasional, and decidedly plain seamsters, our young friends are a prodigious success. Thanks to a wide sartorial inexperience, they never know when things are sufficiently stitched; meanwhile, an exuberance of physical energy inspires them to unusual endeavor. It is not a point of clumsiness alone, but also with reference to com-

pensatory muscular vigor, that boys' "fingers are all thumbs." So, once the juvenile amateur has begun operations, needle in hand, a clear triumph is assured. The badge will speedily become practically an original part of the lad's garment of state; and, consequently, must afterward be in shining evidence whenever its proprietor can not contrive to go about in shirt-sleeves.

### SECTION III—SAVING APPEARANCES

Another suggestion:—Since the emblems will probably be of such material as, with time, to fade, consult appearances by encouraging the members to replace used up specimens with fresh ones.

To quite an extent, such renewals can be fostered by the employment, already suggested, of two or more varieties of the button: under this practice, the bearers, by the fact of advancement in the society, will require its different decorations. The purpose in view will be again furthered by an arrangement providing that any lad who considers his badge the worse for wear, may, without new expense, exchange it for a fresh one similar to the first. Very rarely will this privilege be abused. On the contrary young people of the male sex are so entirely at ease under old articles of wear and so indifferent to things ornamental in general that the proposed system of trading, though altogether to their advantage, can never be brought about as extensively as one would desire.

And finally, whenever the necessity may arise, the society management should make determined efforts to prevent the emblem from losing caste by

compromising repose on the breasts of boys too small for the organization. Much in this direction can be done by appeals to the members themselves exhorting them to resent any such unlawful decoration on the part of their upstart younger brothers and friends. The same result can be furthered by elaborate threats that little fellows who prematurely don the badge will, perhaps, be excluded from membership even when they come to be of eligible years or height.

Another preventive measure will be to secure the return of lost or pilfered buttons, by offering a fraction of the original price to youngsters presenting them. Little chaps, whether they be lucky finders or light-fingered operators, when stirred by this bright business prospect, readily deliver up the little treasure-trove. They are, at least, virtuous enough to prefer the modest reward—a few solid pennies for their own—to false glitter in the trappings of other people's glory.

#### SECTION IV—BUTTON TRAFFIC MADE EASY

The same suggestion that closed the chapter on gifts is offered as the final one concerning badges. It is that the management of some local store be induced to have a share in the proceedings.

If the emblems are to be freely worn, they must always be within easy reach of lads who wish either to become purchasers or to make exchanges. On the other hand, as a saving of both time and dignity, the organizer prudently so arranges as not to personally handle the little articles. Hence the



need of finding some accommodating merchant who will engage in badge-traffic in the director's stead.

This service, which many a live dealer will regard as having excellent advertising effect, is one to be asked all the more eagerly by any leader who, like the author, feels the need of connecting his organization in every possible way with the life and bustle of the town. Assuredly, a badge is all the grander to youngsters who see it placed publicly for sale along with valuable merchandise. And, then, to repeat a favorite consideration, the boys themselves are always benefited by finding the belongings of their society placed in the midst of what, to boyish minds, seem distinguished surroundings.

But, while the reverend superintendent should personally neither sell nor exchange badges he can not free himself from the duty of directing their distribution from afar. A first care will be to bar would-be purchasers who are not of the union; accordingly, the organizer must in some way designate each individual who may buy. To that end, let him furnish for his followers a card, prepared in such a way as to defy counterfeiters, which each genuine member, when applying for a button, must pass in as evidence that he belongs to the flock. The requirement that all badge seekers shall personally secure this certificate from the director has an advantage over and above its primary function of withholding the emblem from unauthorized hands. It can not but largely promote the brief but profitable calls which, as the writer contends, well-managed youngsters will always be trained to make on the adult who has taken them in charge.

The task of issuing certificates becomes in no wise complicated or burdensome when extended so as to cover transactions arising from the use of the multiple badge. The same card can then be made to entitle a lad to any one of the emblem's different grades; the director signifies this or that special variety by merely detaching certain portions of the card in such a way as to give it changes of outlines—each of these changes having its own meaning. Afterward, the person disposing of badges, being, of course, prepared to read these alterations, has only to glance at a purchaser's card in order to know precisely the special decoration it demands.

The handy system just described relieves one from the need of giving his followers any written statement concerning the badge degree<sup>a</sup> to which they are entitled. A clear advantage is thereby gained, for the use of ink would interfere with a desirable, free, and easy way of doing things; while penciling, if committed to boyish keeping, must be rated a very probable exception to the rule "*scripta manent.*"

At the risk of becoming over-explicit, I will here illustrate by presenting a certificate now in use and easily able to answer for as many emblem varieties as can be found practicable.<sup>1</sup>

This slip works in accordance with a very simple rule; the honors it demands wane with its own surface. The card if intact calls for the highest button; minus one corner it entitles to the article

<sup>1</sup>Readers who may wish to consider the trio of buttons which for a couple of decades have steadily maintained popularity in the author's sodalities will find that little decorative family illustrated in the subjoined appendix, where some information on the business side of the subject has been added.

next lower in dignity; minus two corners it stands for the immediately succeeding lesser emblem, and so on should there be still other minor grades to be designated. The lines appearing in the cut, while of course not strictly necessary, can be advantageously repeated on any cards printed for the purpose now in view. By formally providing for the removal of certain parts of the slip, they give to its edges, when torn, a sufficient suggestion of neatness and regularity.



## CHAPTER XI

### LIBRARY HINTS

#### SECTION I—A FEW BOOKS SUFFICE

FOLLOWING the general plan already announced, this chapter treats of the library, not immediately in any religious or educational light, but merely as a harmless attraction which, however, performs the further service of forestalling the perusal of hurtful literature. Meanwhile the narrowing of my direct object does not forbid a few hints concerning the tasks of providing suitable reading matter and giving it protection.

The first of these undertakings is simplified by the fact that there is no call for any attempt at establishing the usual plurality of well-filled departments. An undivided collection of entertainers—mostly fictional—will answer; and this, for about one hundred patrons, can be of small bulk.<sup>1</sup> As the most tireless of our book wormlings is easily made to live on some forty volumes yearly, a stock numbering about two hundred will do him for the entire period of membership.

Nevertheless, the literary arsenal gains with further growth; for if only the above number of tales be kept on the shelves veteran visitors will be forced to come on the run in order to secure the

<sup>1</sup>The fact that many of the boys gathered will be indifferent to the library does not matter; for, after all, it seems better to accept as readers only a limited number of those in the ranks who offer themselves. This plan makes library visits a privilege and thus promotes care of the books.

few stories still unread. Raise the figure to three hundred narratives and the ancients need never arrive at the sacrifice of dignity and breath.

This much done a final lot of books might be added as a mere matter of economy. These will be duplicates of some of the more popular volumes that have already been secured and are besides out of copyright. Here the latter detail is the one chiefly favorable to the scheme in hand; liberation from copyright insures a reduction of price for the new increase, which thereupon assists by lessening the wear and tear of more costly matter. To be sure the bookcase, presenting through these attentions a front not yet four hundred strong, will seem to the casual observer inadequate; nevertheless, like many a sound financial institution of modest appearance, it will at any time be ready to satisfy all comers.

## SECTION II—VANDALISM RESTRAINED

But the crucial element of the present undertaking is that of preserving the printed family visitors from injury while making their rounds.

As a first move toward securing them full protection, let us look well to the efficiency of the chief protectors, these being persons to whom books must be submitted after use in order that bad treatment may be detected and atoned for. Where the maintenance of good order has been assured, this necessary inspection should be exercised preferably by workers of the gentler sex. Decisions by the latter judges will be more feared in advance and less unresignedly accepted after sentence; for, as well as the boys can make out, ladies are born authori-



ties on neatness, while men merely strive for ideas on the subject.

The next precautionary step may advisedly be the establishment of a small matriculation fee directed to the exclusion of youngsters not really interested in books. A nickel will suffice. Chaps of wholly undeveloped sedentary ability but inclined to follow their companions and take from the shelves "just for the fun of the thing" are likely to think twice when the sacrifice of even a few pennies figures as an essential preliminary to the joke.

### SECTION III—A PAPER DETECTIVE

Of course it will be necessary to number the prints, but a blank-book for marking their "comings and goings" is employed more frequently than is justified by results. The record maintained by this means is of cumbersomely slow operation at busy moments when the boys are actually on hand, and is still more trying if lost books must be traced. A substitute expedient, one that has been found to answer excellently for the rather small circle of readers contemplated, consists of the present card.

*Name*.....

*Address*.....

*No. of Book*..... *Date*.....

*No. of Book*..... *Date*.....

***Return this Book-mark with the Book***

This card is to be used as follows: The member having written his name and address on the lines indicated, the workers at the shelves inscribe on both the card and the stub (the latter serving as a detachable "book-mark") the other items called for, *i.e.*, the number of the volume loaned and the date of the transaction. While the card itself remains in the keeping of the library administration, the "book-mark" is handed to the visitor to be returned by him, in accordance with the instructions printed on the book-mark, along with the book.

The advantages of this arrangement are easily observed. Master Book-lover, bringing back the explored volume, offers it for inspection to one worker and at the same time delivers his slip (the stub or book-mark) to another worker. As that bit of cardboard, by means of its inscribed date, betrays the offense (if it has occurred) of keeping the print out overtime, the visitor's entire case is at once before the administration, and with the settlement of any incidental fines is promptly closed.<sup>1</sup>

In this, the normal operation of the plan, the card (from which the book-mark was detached) need play no very active part. It is merely matched with the corresponding stub after the return of the latter, and when comparison has shown that the figures of the stub have been returned as first writ-

<sup>1</sup>As is explained elsewhere, it is in my opinion a mistake to establish fines in connection with the essential doings of the society; for when fines are so levied the only possible sanction for non-payment is the undesirable one of dismissal. However, the same financial penalties are safely applied in the library where the withdrawal of reading privileges can always operate against delinquents without disturbing their membership in the association proper.

ten, both the card and the book-mark are destroyed.

Fortunately, the smooth transaction of business suffers but little when the member returns without the detached stub. In that event recourse must be had to the card itself, which will be quickly identified by either the book-number or the boy's name (both having been inscribed); then (as the card has been marked with the date on which the volume was loaned) matters can move as before.

And, finally, the present scheme stands loyally by the management whenever Master Book-lover's uncontrollable affection for good reading may have prevented him from reappearing with the borrowed print at all. This situation enables the card to pose at its best, for it bears the name of the missing litterateur, the number of the book concerned, and the date of its departure;—in fact all the information needful for proceedings toward recovering the property.

#### SECTION IV—A RULE OF CHRISTIAN LIFE APPLIED

Besides the charge of a penny or so for the loss of the book-mark, protective fines may be advisably placed against such transgressions as damaging the extra cover, retaining the book beyond the allotted time, or returning it in an injured condition.

The "extra cover" just mentioned and its attendant regulation are helpful to a degree worthy of special explanation. By simply supplying the books with temporary paper apparel and watchfully shielding the latter from harm, the management does a great deal toward safeguarding the

prints themselves. We have here something of a repetition of the principle by which people busy combating venial sin are saved from mortal; the boys, having become intent on respectful handling of mere flimsy extra covers, instinctively treat the things covered as if of sacred character.

Lastly it is clear that culprits can not be disciplined for returning loans in bad condition if given any possible ground for affirming that the same were damaged when received. Hence the greatest care should be taken that no book goes out in a condition forbidden the books in their home-coming.

Vigilance in this regard should extend beyond the volumes themselves to their paper life-preservers, the extra covers. The latter, be it noted, are permanently kept without trouble at the very acme of cheap respectability. A couple of gentle assistants will cut, fold, paste, and number a dozen of them in ten minutes, and this without becoming at all too busy for a pleasant, companionable chat on passing events.

## CHAPTER XII

### INDOOR FUN

#### SECTION I—FOR THE LONG WINTER NIGHTS

IN addition to whatever else may be done it seems necessary for success to institute occasional indoor entertainments of some kind or other. Boys, as long as they are united, burn with chronic fever for fun "in a crowd," and stand eager to furnish the crowd if only somebody will supply material and place for the fun. Summer outings are often accorded this popular demand, but these afford the cause lesser help for the reason that they must be held while meetings are suspended. Throughout the great northern belt of this country, anyway, the reunions, to have any notable recruiting and upbuilding efficiency, must be of the cold weather type co-existent with our cold weather religious exercises; and consequently need to be held under a roof.

As many as three or four a year of these indoor fun-gathering rallies are likely to be found indispensable. Obviously athletic meets, if there be an armory or other suitable covered place available, can supply excellently well. Frequently the preferred plan is that of having a few of the members prepare some sort of stage performance for presentation before their companions and, perhaps, grown friends. Never having made trial of this proceeding the writer can not offer any hints in its



favor. On the other hand, many a priest will feel quite unable to make his clients self-sustaining in this particular.

Should it be found necessary to utilize the work of professionals, very satisfactory results may sometimes be obtained by turning the entire society into a "theater party" with the top gallery of some reputable playhouse for its objective, where, perched as in a choice aerie, the visitors enjoy a minstrel show or other congenial performance. It may be remarked that, on such occasions, admission is likely to be obtained at rates greatly reduced in view of the number of boys concerned, together with their advertising effect on the grown-up element of the congregation.

## SECTION II—"HOMEMADE" AMUSEMENT

Meanwhile, a form of entertainment which, if permitted by circumstances, richly demands recommendation is had by gathering the crowd, not before a stage, but around a floor space or "pit" to be treated to anything obtainable in the line of songs, dances, sketches, etc.; these features being interspersed with games of more or less athletic cast held by the members themselves in the same "arena."<sup>1</sup> This combination of dramatics and odd sports is eminently acceptable to our young friends, who like nothing better than an arrangement making them at one moment close-range spectators of theatricals and at the next principals or enthusiastic backers in doings of their own.

<sup>1</sup>The games here suggested are not deeds of speed and prowess, but rather burlesques on the same. In the appendix of this volume will be found descriptions of a few specimens with which the writer has often seen boys splendidly occupied.

Whoever may set out to utilize the games here contemplated will find them at the start so inspiring as to stand in no need of prizes in order to win participants in abundance. However, the reverend manager should not let himself be thereby misled to rely on the games as being permanently able to retain the fulness of their early popular standing. On the contrary such exercises quickly lose much of their entertaining vigor; and still they always remain acceptable enough, at least with the backing of a few small material incentives, to serve as a good second to the dramatic features of the evening.

Meanwhile economy is of course consulted. For while the present form of entertainment will in the long run demand professional performers, it will never call for them in anything like the number that would be necessary were the audience of no assistance to itself.

### SECTION III—PALATIAL DENS

The question of providing a place for the foregoing doings will be all the more confidently approached if one fully realizes that he can manage with very little space, whether horizontal or perpendicular. As the writer has seen, the floor used by competitors and performers answers if thirty feet by fifteen (even a smaller allowance might do), and nine hundred square feet, besides supplying the required "arena" and a corner for an elderly but indispensable piano, can be made to accommodate seats (a special construction in tiers) for more than one hundred and fifty spectators.

As there is no way of getting on with imperfectly accommodated youngsters jostling one another in order to see the "sights," large attendance demands an arrangement placing the audience in rows rising one above the other. This order can be obtained offhand by a circle of benches filled with spectators at whose feet a second set is placed, in oriental style, on the floor. To be sure in the present instance nobody arriving for the lower place can build much on hearing the invitation "*ascende superius*"; nevertheless, under the circumstances there will be no complaint. The construction of permanent seats is hardly justified save in places where an abundance of dramatic talent can permanently supply needful support. When this advantage is enjoyed, "opera chairs" of ideal solidity are provided by a repetition *en petite* of the baseball bleachers.<sup>1</sup>

There is much further encouragement in the fact that the height of our "theater" does not matter; eight feet will suffice. It may be calmly conceded that resulting conditions will not be superlatively hygienic, but after all they do no more than make the boys temporarily as badly off as many of their number permanently are in their own wretched homes. Then again, one may licitly prescind a bit from the question of health when promoting such fun as in turn promotes religion, which promotes morality, which finally advances corporal well-being far better

<sup>1</sup>This observatory may better be low (with at most five or six seating surfaces) and long rather than high and short. The comfort of spectators will be sufficiently assured by making each seating surface twelve inches in height by eighteen in width.

than can be accomplished through superior ventilation.

Besides it is to be taken into account that the games learned at our entertainments are destined to be repeated elsewhere and with wholesome results. After your evening's indoor fun is over its restless spirit survives in vacant lots, back yards, side streets, and other boyish Elysian vales; and, while purging these resorts of idleness—the mischief maker for both body and soul—fills them with active sports helpful to muscle and nerve. Accordingly, the worthy director responsible for sublime transactions in lowly quarters ought not to feel at a loss for words of self-defense; it should be a sufficient answer for critics that the boys, as soon as they get in, will surely “raise the roof.”

Add to the foregoing considerations, that with juveniles the appearance of their rendezvous, whether exterior or interior, counts for absolutely nothing, while awkwardness of access only swells the charm, and in many a rectory it will be asked whether the youngsters of the parish can not be made at home in some basement, outbuilding, or loft never before dreamed of as being adequate. Don Bosco, that eminent, saintly friend of the young, held his first indoor rallies in a deserted barn, thereby supplying a very encouraging object-lesson for all who are engaged in his work. Provide no matter what covered refuge able merely to keep some heat in and most of the weather out; equip it with plenty of light and with facilities for the enjoyment of the muscular, the spectacular, and the vernacular, and dazzled by these advantages your guests will hardly know whether their sur-

roundings bespeak the rudeness of a shed or the splendors of an Alhambra.

Indeed an out-of-the-way location carries with it the advantage of freeing the amusement seekers to indulge in uproar, the cultivation of which is one of their leading specialties. Boys crowded together dearly love lung exercise with whatever noisy accompaniments may be available, and if restrained in this particular are much in the position of adult rollickers invited to make merry in whispers. Consequently Bedlam-making, while it will hardly be countenanced by modern Lord Chesterfields, can be justly rated as helpful as it is inexpensive. Rejoice, therefore, I would confidently whisper, to the directors heroic enough to suffer for the cause, when the rising din has become deafeningly terrific; and should your stentors seem to be at all dilatory in attaining to ideal unearthliness, pass around a score or two of fish horns and hold your ears.

#### SECTION IV—POLLUX EXONERATED

Sparring, which can be very helpful to indoor amusement, seems to be under condemnation chiefly because of its supposed contribution to the pugnacity already sufficiently developed in the junior American church militant. It may well be doubted, however, whether any reasonable person who has actually seen the pastime tested among boys will ban it on the ground just noticed.

Experience shows that softly padded gloves, which of course are the only ones to be used, temporarily melt all native belligerency into the most



innocent appreciation for "rough and tumble" fun. So fully is this the case that the "promoter" may keep the fistic ring in service year after year without ever being called upon to deal with the slightest indication of ill will. Indeed it is a fact, exceedingly surprising probably to most opponents of the sport, that, when volunteer boy-boxers emerge from the crowd and don the gloves for a "set to" in the presence of their merry companions, they almost invariably prove to be close chums who were seated side by side and have risen to try conclusions simply as part of their friendly intercourse.

Neither is the diversion, surrounded with ordinary precautions, to be considered a menace to bodily safety. Two or three rounds occurring in a space clear of all obstructions can produce nothing worse than the optical shading which a red-blooded juvenile contestant willingly receives for the chance of returning. Boxing, then, threatens no more serious injury than attaches to any and every sport in which live boys care to engage; and it seems entirely proper to let them pummel one another to their hearts' content; especially when, owing to indirect spiritual results, the blows are felt chiefly by the enemy of their souls.

#### SECTION V—PERMANENT ENTERTAINMENT CARDS

Assuming that events requiring the presentation of tickets are maintained, a distinct advantage seems assured by the use of permanent cards inscribed with the name of the member concerned and admitting him to each and every occasion

throughout his entire membership in the society. While a special ticket of the kind imparts to any individual entertainment something of the exclusiveness so well appreciated by human nature, it is of further help by serving as a synopsisd history and promise of similar events past and future which aids the youthful imagination to magnify the fraternity's secular activity up to something encouragingly larger than the reality.

The plan of making the cards good "for life" can be all the more cheerfully adopted for the reason that it fits in well with the system which at all events will probably have to be followed in their distribution. As a moment's reflection shows, method of some kind is necessary if tickets are to be passed smoothly into the hands of a large throng of youthful claimants with assurance added that everybody is supplied properly and nobody beyond his due. Hence the director with this undertaking in prospect naturally turns to the evening meeting where he would have the cards delivered to the members keeping their regular places.

Clearly the distribution, when thus effected, can not fail to act as a most stirring and desirable stimulus to attendance; however, it must be executed in a dignified manner worthy of the church in which, as I assume, all meetings are held. Consequently, the presentations need to be so safeguarded as to restrain outsiders from crowding in for booty and real members from striving to appropriate, for the benefit of the non-enrolled, more than the single favor that each genuine adherent is expected to receive. Note that it is not sufficient to stand successfully against these tricksters when already in

action; the sacredness of the place demands that they be kept from even asserting themselves; accordingly arrangements will have to be such as to show clearly beforehand that any attempt at interloping or plying the "grab game" must prove absolutely fruitless. Now the creation of this forbidding prospect will hardly be effected unless, as a first essential, the tickets to be distributed are made to bear plainly the written names of their intended recipients; but if this precaution is to be taken, the requisite labor in penmanship may better be spent once and for all on permanent cards than be repeated over and over for each special event.

#### SECTION VI—METHOD HELPS METHOD

The remark may be appropriately made here that "ticket giving" in church gains splendid additional protection through enforcement of the rule (urged in Chapter XXIII) keeping each worshiper in a fixed seat. Where this system obtains, the printed objects to be presented may carry the pew numbers of the members concerned along with their names; the officer making distributions is then obliged to manipulate at a time only the six or eight cards belonging to the same seat and plainly assigned to an equal number of visible, expectant owners installed therein. Under these favorable circumstances he quickly transacts the delivery at a minimum danger of making the slightest mistake. Over and above the foregoing expedients, the writer has always prefaced his own presentations with an announcement forbidding argument with the officers and promising in return immediate at-

tention to any neglected lads who might report at the close of the meeting, and has then seen the distribution proceed, time and time again, wholly free from any objectionable talk or stir.

Let me here observe in passing that, while fixed pews for members facilitate the delivery of permanent cards marked with the members' pew numbers, the latter system gives reciprocally invaluable support to the former. The fact that any cherished products of the society can not meet the assignees save in certain appointed places, suffices by itself to make the remembrance and occupancy of such appointed places a matter of sacred duty. With their belongings at stake boys always turn up where they themselves belong.

It goes without saying that cards unavoidably committed to juvenile keeping for some little time preceding the dates of entertainments are thereby menaced with no inconsiderable amount of wear and tear. For that reason it seems helpful to print on the cards themselves an injunction, never obeyed with intemperate exactitude, that their storage must not be in the pockets, but at home. A still more effective safeguard for the over-popular objects is to have them made of the strongest material obtainable.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BOYS' CLUB

#### SECTION I—RARELY FOR IMMEDIATE PASTORAL DIRECTION

IT MAY seem but a slight step for a priest who has instituted indoor entertainments held at irregular intervals to pass on to the management of the "open house" maintained continuously on certain fixed nights and commonly called "the club"; as a rule, nevertheless, the sacerdotal worker can be safely and strongly counseled against so doing. Apparently the reasons that dissuade do not hold for the housing of a society so small as to preserve a quasi-family spirit, but they do apply in full force wherever attempts are made to gather boys in large numbers. The point intended is that, while ordinarily the clerical patron of the young can achieve the best of success without the club, he will find it almost certainly a heavy burden and probably even a source of occasional serious interference with his sacred ministry.

It is not necessary to enlarge here on the first part of this contention; the demonstration of priestly efficiency is one of the objects of everything hitherto written and of pretty much all that follows. However, the clergyman's ability to dispense with the permanent amusement center is not maintained for every locality; it may be that here and there the state of religious feeling prevents



young people from being brought under salutary influences unless through the club. The view taken is that, in the United States, districts of the kind are very rare and that, under the conditions ordinarily prevailing, the priest boy-gatherer needs no permanent social base of operations whatever.

The onerous character of the task, vouched for by those who, like the author, have undertaken it, ought to be readily conceded as necessarily resulting from the constant presence of fickle, mischief-loving beneficiaries. Of course, under anything like normal conditions no Catholic clergyman ever dreams of becoming the "resident" manager of a large club; his plan is to govern through one or more lieutenants. Now, where these representatives assume full responsibility, the undertaking *ipso facto* passes from clerical to non-clerical control, of which later; but lay workers, as long as they merely act for the priest, can not save him to any considerable extent. Even granting that the latter finds his adult aids trustworthy beyond all need of supervision, he soon discovers that only the direct personal influence of the man who "has the final say" prevents desirable boyish exhilaration from degenerating into deplorable excess, and for that reason alone will feel himself obliged to remain in the club-rooms much of the time that they are open.

Objection to the priest's control grows with the consideration that even his steady personal supervision will not restrain youngsters from doings necessitating more disciplinary action than the spiritual guide can safely exercise toward any of his

spiritual flock. It must be kept in mind that no matter how attractive the recreation place may be, some of the guests tire of it after a while and from then on, like children abusing an over-familiar toy, find more satisfaction in upsetting and wrecking things than by putting them to legitimate use.

If such visitors would only frankly declare their sentiments and quit, all would be well; but unfortunately mischief-making and general destructiveness are to them a real pleasure; so they continue presenting themselves until visited with suspension. Now the measures sometimes to be necessarily taken for the enforcement of this penalty can have the unhappy effect of alienating offending boys and even their families from the priest, thus offsetting very considerably the good accomplished in other respects by the work.

## SECTION II—INVITING TO ZEALOUS LAYMEN

But the club, while usually offering the clerical worker no advantages and involving him betimes in serious difficulties, strongly commends itself in certain localities to zealous and competent laymen. In fact, it is hardly conceivable that non-clerical boy-savers should find any other agency by which to bring young people within reach. It is not to be expected that lay workers will find themselves able to inaugurate largely attended religious meetings; they must lead by kindly personal intercourse and especially through catechetical instruction for Confession, First Communion, and Confirmation. Now the club-room furnishes the only available field for personal intercourse, while one of its corners or some

near-by apartment will always facilitate preparations for the sacraments.

Moreover, persons not engaged in the sacred ministry can mete out strict justice to unworthy juveniles without dread of bringing about dire spiritual loss. Let the religiously neglected lad become seriously angered with the priest and there is danger that, yielding to the suggestions of the Evil One, he may put aside all practice of his faith; when, however, his difficulty has been merely with a layman, serious results of the kind are little to be feared.

No matter what his calling, the person who would successfully take any chief part in club work needs to be ready with warm practical interest in boyish affairs, and must above all be a first-class disciplinarian. A forward page postulating only ordinary power of control in directors treats solely of priests clothed with the prestige of their sublime office, and considers even these as occupied wholly apart from the permanent recreation center and its complications. But certainly, in the difficult undertaking now considered, if the best of natural ability to secure prompt obedience be wanting little can be accomplished by the clergyman and much less by any other.

Meanwhile the author's contention that the natural rulers of the recreation home are efficient laymen does not by any means exclude the sacerdotal friend from all important personal co-operation. Indeed the ideal club administration is one in which non-clericals exercising full control and shouldering all responsibilities are supported by a zealous priest who, while making the rooms an often visited apos-

tolic field, is ever ready with his great influence to oil the waters of the little juvenile sea as soon as ever they are seen to be astir.

### SECTION III—WITH THE CLUB'S OPPONENTS

Two motives looking to the spiritual improvement of boys are found in the establishment of amusement centers; the first is simply that of removing juveniles from the evils of the street; its companion purpose is the higher one of leading juveniles to practise their religion. In my opinion the latter of these objects is of such superior relative importance as to almost crowd the other out of consideration. Better equip a single lad to resist temptations of every kind and from now on, than merely shield a dozen from spiritual dangers which anyway they will soon have to face. This view indicates at once the answer to the question, "In what localities are clubs really necessary"? I reply, wherever there are boys in numbers who, unless aided through that particular agency, will not grow to be practical Catholics.

Nor is it true, though commonly urged, that in practice the great good here contemplated will be ruinously offset by a tendency on the part of the gathering place to weaken home life and accustom youngsters to spend their evenings more or less in the streets. Regarding this matter a first consideration is that, nowadays, wherever our spiritually-famished Catholic boys are to be had in numbers their living quarters are usually too straitened to offer shelter any longer than is absolutely needful; and too often the same boys, belonging as they do

to utterly careless families, are already the victims of parental neglect. It is, then, wide of the mark to argue that such young people ought not to be withdrawn from home life, for that advantage is one they do not and can not enjoy. The misery of wretchedly contracted house room and the weariness of overworked parents constitute the deplorable beginnings of the evil; and when to these irreligion adds slovenliness, indifference, chronic bad temper, and drunken brutality the domesticity of the family abode is completely wrecked.

In consequence, as soon as the evening meal is over, the chores run, and the coal up from the basement, the restless, noisy son of nominal Catholic toilers is fully conscious that the consent of those concerned commits him to the outer air; and too often the willing exile has reason to feel that his welcome back will be at its modest best after physical activity will have fully prepared him for a quiet pillow. Is it not, then, regrettable that the solicitude of worthy people for the preservation of home spirit where it does not and, practically speaking, can not exist should antagonize the club through which, by the promotion of practical religious life, the missing home spirit can be created?

Nevertheless, there still remains this difficulty, that the amusement center will always manage to enforce its demands on at least a certain number of parents who are sufficiently alive to domestic possibilities and would show conservatism if left to themselves. These reluctantly permit their dear ones to exchange the home for the club which the dear ones soon afterward exchange for the streets. But when the fathers and mothers in question nul-



lify other excellent parental endeavor by neglecting to give their offspring the spiritual training provided by the club, the outcome just granted need not cause dismay. Assuredly a street boy with religion in his heart is preferable to a home boy with none.

#### SECTION IV—EVENING'S SHADES BRIGHTENED

This defense will gain strength if it can be shown, as the writer believes that, after dark, frequentation of public places, though admittedly unfavorable to juvenile morals, is by no means the dire menace conjured up by multitudes of honest minds. Indeed to hear the vigorous but vague denunciations of many worthies eager to "shoo" all youngsters indoors evenings along with the chickens, it might be thought that some wholly inexplicable sinister influence deadly for youthful souls and bodies alike attaches to the moonbeams and starlight. But, after all, the dreaded mischief is nothing more than the tangible misfortune of exposure to adult bad example, together with removal from adult observation, and is readily investigated.

A glance at prevailing conditions reveals no foundation for the belief that during early night hours far more than at other moments, our young people will be corrupted in the streets by a freer display of vice than there witnessed. No doubt it is after curfew time that drunkenness and impurity are most alive, but then, thank God, we are living in a land where the law enforces at least external respect for morality and does so about as effectively by night as by day.

Neither is it to be admitted that juveniles in the earlier teens (those in the later teens will have the freedom of the streets anyway) are so exceedingly susceptible to near-by adult iniquity; on the contrary they are not over-observant, much less inquisitive, regarding matters of the kind. Grouped into noisy fun-making gangs the restless chaps are so busy with their own affairs as to heed only slightly the sound of the too often filled glass clicking behind saloon doors, or overt suggestions of affairs still worse.

#### SECTION V—WHERE SUNLIGHT IS DARKNESS

But, even while boys abroad at the beginning of the night are largely shielded by police activity as well as by their own activity from the depravity of evil-doers, it will be objected that they nevertheless obtain very dangerous facilities for finding and following devious ways of their own. In other words, the ordinary daylight observation exercised by older acquaintances generally is so much of a restraint on the young that its presence or absence is held to differentiate the hours at which minors may or may not be safely away from the parental roof.

Certainly, this criterion is most justly applicable to reasonably-populated localities enjoying more or less of the village spirit of universal neighborliness. In such communities, thanks to unrestricted acquaintanceship, everybody is directly or indirectly in communication with everybody else. Consequently, whether by way of complaint, gossip, or friendly interest, daylight misconduct is promptly reported to parents or guardians while unseen wrongdoings of the night can not be so carried.

But, when we travel into the great crowded cities—the very places in which the club most easily finds its *raison d'être*—this informal but natural and effective union of all the elders for the protection of all the juniors is crippled by that modern blight, the social isolation of contiguous families. Such, indeed, is the prevalence of this enemy to domestic government that in our metropolis, for example, scarcely one adult citizen in six “knows” one in six of the boys of the block in the neighborly way requisite that news of mischief-making be forwarded directly or indirectly to the ears of the fathers and mothers concerned. Hence in our great modern human hives it is vain to expect that observation by the public will guard a junior practically more by sunlight than after dark; for, on turning the adjoining corner and at no matter what hour of the twenty-four, he begins to be as much removed from the parental ken as if transferred to some strange town.

These considerations suffice, I trust, to free the prudently located club from the charge of antagonizing the domestic abode. Its invitations are addressed mainly to boys shut out from home life; and, should it occasionally draw young people from really protective family circles into the electric light of the city rambles, there is nevertheless great relief in reflecting that the dangers of the latter are far less than are often pictured; and, furthermore, that in the larger centers of population half of the evil—lack of neighborly notice and intervention—is, anyway, an ever present drawback to be steadily counteracted, of course; but hardly to be feared at 9.30 P.M. more than at noon.

## SECTION VI—EVIL-DOERS CONSIDERED

The recreation place encounters new opposition from those who see in its permanent full gatherings constant opportunities for vicious youngsters by which to lead others astray. This view influences the writer to the extent that he would be inclined to the measure, at once precautionary and deterrent, of excluding from the club some of the lads of bad life whose admission into simple church societies he in a future chapter will defend.

But, as critics urge that corrupt individuals, unknown as such, can not be debarred, it is proper to reply that the amusement center, while hurtful, owing to the bad example of some who are below the spiritual average, is on the other hand helpful through the good example of some who are above the same. To which consideration add the hope that young profligates kept well occupied in the club may do less harm there than in idleness elsewhere. And finally the rendezvous, when manned by a sufficient number of whole-souled adults willing to mix freely with their charges, would seem really able to hold the apprehended evil in check.

## CHAPTER XIV

### CLUB HINTS

#### SECTION I—THE PLACE AND ITS CHIEF MANAGER

LET me here add something regarding certain important details of management. When establishing a club, generous souls should remember that little is accomplished by those who overdo. A gathering place operating every night is very likely to prove too much of a burden for the workers themselves, besides risking that the guests will tire of the enterprise, and with troublesome results. A more prudent course, at least in the beginning, will be to offer hospitality on one, two, or three fixed nights weekly; and, no matter whether the "open door" be intermittent or permanent, I would always be in manifest readiness to close should the need at any time arise of bringing young America to its senses.

The club, especially if its evenings are frequent, will hardly enjoy the secure tenure of life unless its promoters command sufficient means for the services of at least one competent paid manager. This person, who before the boys anyway should be clothed with full power for dismissal, finds a business motive for being always present and so constitutes an unfailingly reliable source of supervision to which volunteer associates can add at will. Obviously the movement can not put forward more than a single administrative chief; and



whenever that leading domestic ruler may miss an evening the boys will be more or less inclined to "make a night of it." Hence the advisability of providing at least one thoroughgoing worker fitted to exercise supreme authority and compensated sufficiently to consider unbroken attendance a matter of strict obligation. To be sure, anybody who volunteers for this work is *ipso facto* a generous person; but faultless persevering association with a lot of youngsters regardless of other calls, demands creatures of heroic and, therefore, rarer mold. Better prospects, then, are assured if those who tender their services gratis enjoy both distrust of themselves and financial resources rendering them willing and able to secure the important help proposed.

The more the recreation quarters lend themselves to instant and complete survey the better for discipline. When ideal in this respect they consist of a single sufficiently large room with neither recesses nor obstructions of any kind. Things merely ornamental should be banned. While powerless under the circumstances to accomplish any noticeable good, they would demand constant protection against vandalism. The club, like the ship stripped for action, should furnish in abundance whatever is necessary for the purpose in view, but absolutely nothing besides.

## SECTION II—THE READING ROOM

The reading room or corner, conceived as an attraction rather than an educational feature, admits some local religious and secular newspapers; but, with this much welcome accorded unadorned

prints, it holds so strictly to the primeval sources of literature as to accommodate only pictorials.

We may be a bit surprised that depicted scenes thoroughly engage youngsters not especially interested in the originals represented, and that jokes imperfectly understood but elaborately fitted out in red and yellow should move the same parties to intense glee; however, the why and wherefore of such puzzles are the boys' own affairs. Present considerations deal with only the helpful fact that illustrated matter, serious as well as comic, is very highly appreciated by patrons in well-ventilated knickerbockers whose scholastic attainments cover little more than the twenty-six membered key with which the treasures of English are unlocked.

Meanwhile the belongings of the "literary" department need to be securely fastened in place; this as a precaution against the destructive energy of rival claimants as well as against the boyish mania of utilizing all things movable for the bombardment of all things stationary. Indeed, when the more popular publications are concerned, the same protective measure is dictated by the bed-rock economical reason that in olden times justified the practice of chaining Bibles to the churches.

### SECTION III—THE GYMNASIUM AND THE MUSICAL DEPARTMENT

Dumb-bells, Indian clubs, and other "throwables," if provided for the club, should be under lock and key when not in real use. Left at large they entail more watching than their services are worth. Neither should any gymnastic objects that

are easily injured be put into steady commission. Even the fist-loving punching bag fails as a permanent feature; it thrives on the hardest of blows but dies from the prick of a pin.

In fact, only irremovable and practically indestructible means of physical exercise should be permanently supplied. Fortunately, apparatus of the kind and of essential importance is of such comparatively small bulk as to be accommodated in straitened quarters. The entire town and its suburbs will hardly do the boys for their ordinary daily allowance of bodily exertion, but the luxuries of corporal activity—a few rings, ropes, and ladders—like most other delicacies, occupy little space. If possible the collection should include traveling rings, the horizontal bar, and a tumbling mat.<sup>1</sup> But perhaps no other apparatus can rank with that narrow-gage railway to athletic glory, the parallel bars. Frequently they are seen surrounded by supple performers awaiting turn to twist themselves into weird, mysterious shapes worthy of place in acrobatic dreamland.

As the gamut is a splendid promoter of club liveliness, workers will always do what they can toward providing music or any plausible approaches to the same. At least mouth organs and "cordeens" will be available and these crude enter-

<sup>1</sup>A second-hand common mattress will answer if protected as follows: Secure for it a blanket made of the heaviest canvas, the strips of which must be connected with strong material, preferably shoemakers' waxed ends. If this cover, which practically never wears out, be thrown loosely over the mattress it will shield the latter from all injury. The cushion thus obtained stands any amount of jumping even by boys in everyday rough shoes; and, consequently, obviates the need of the gymnasium slippers demanded for tumbling mats used in the ordinary way.

tainers, combining with the "bones" to burlesque the stately ideals of harmony, lead many an impromptu terpsichorean shuffle which, be it single or double, neat or clumsy, never fails of creating general delight and thunderous applause. Vocal outbursts are very likely to depend on the presence of a piano (it can serve even with notes cracked and out of tune, but should be protected when off duty by removable wooden outworks) and of the sometimes less easily found player. However, when once well rallied, the songsters by their vociferousness give reciprocal inspiration to this leader, moving him to energetic action which needs all the more to be seen for the reason that it can not possibly be heard.

#### SECTION IV—AMUSEMENTS OF INJURED REPUTATION

I am going to offer some defense for billiards, pool, and cards; games which, in connection with boys, are regarded by many as decidedly under a cloud. But at least the very arraignment of these diversions is complimentary to their entertaining power; for unless valuable in that respect, they could never have acquired the popularity in sporting circles that constitutes the head and front of their offending.

Now we should certainly go slowly in depriving the club of any attraction in itself harmless even though the same be elsewhere closely associated with evil. No matter what may be done for the promotion of religion, regrettable indirect outcomes are always possible; even the performance of sacred rites may occasion blasphemy; accord-

ingly it is licit to further our cause by any legitimate means outdoing whatever evil indirectly results.

This rule sustains the accused games. They are most helpful toward filling the recreation house and on the other hand there is no solid ground for believing that their reign there can lead more than a small percentage of the participants to follow a downward path. For, if a handful of the club's *e.g.*, card-players have developed into saloon habitués or professional gamblers, it is but fair to exonerate the place itself of all responsibility for the larger half of the unfortunate group; these, even had they never been members, would have been led by other influences to finish in exactly the same way.

Not to look further, it is, as all know, the common thing for little chaps hardly in their teens to practise card-playing freely in and about their own homes. Assuredly, then, these early experts need no opportunities elsewhere in order to drift into steady gambling, if so disposed.

#### SECTION V—CONCERNING CARD PLAY AT THE CLUB

And now for a couple of hints to managers by whom the paper kings and queens may be permitted to exercise sway. Good order and appearances will be considered by obliging the players to supply their own packs. The proprietors, then, care for their respective collections which otherwise will too often be found toward the close of the evening littering the tables and floor.



But a far more important detail is met in the task of guarding against gambling. It is idle to suppose that cards can be used in the club without inspiring underhand recourse to this practice; and, as the same could easily reach such proportions as to seem tacitly countenanced, vigilant ceaseless repression is called for. Fortunately, however, those of the shufflers and dealers who go astray in this respect immediately supply unconscious but sufficiently clear signs of their misdoing. As long as the game is "for fun," careless gaiety shows itself in the laughter and unrestrained banter of the players; but let nickels be placed at stake, and at once this holiday freedom of bearing yields to silence and a "business is business" air which extends even to the near-by spectators and affords ample evidence of a struggle for the relief of the *sacra auri fames*.

Meanwhile, our erring young friends are so entirely unmindful of this change of front as to go on betraying themselves just as long as the superintendent may keep the nature of his telltale evidence secret. Consequently it is not well that delinquents be accused as if certainly in fault. A positive charge demands the actual production of proof which in this case is far better withheld.

Under the circumstances one may preferably have recourse to the following policy. It is kept before the members that cards will have to be forbidden altogether unless dissociated from gambling and that the latter practice is one that can not be held in check unless dealt with on suspicion. For this reason the rule is established that no boy may engage in the game save with his full consent to

be excluded from the tables in case he should, even though guiltless, be thought an offender. This understanding effects that gamblers can always be promptly disciplined without any revelation of "detective methods" and with no questions asked. The latter advantage is of importance, for the boys' guide will as rarely as possible place them in such a position that fibbing seems the only means of escape.

SECTION VI—THE OTHER OFFENDERS:—BILLIARDS AND POOL

Billiards and pool present over and above the general defense just offered a special apology of their own. The latter games are not, like cards, able to serve pleasure-seekers as a lasting pastime but are self-checking and, as a rule, pall with use. An explanation of this fact is easily supplied. Amusements devoid of muscular features, if they are to permanently suit ordinary masculine taste, must turn on chance; but that element presents itself at the cushioned green for novice players only. "Old hands," on the contrary, find in their more or less perfect control of the rolling ivories an unwelcome suggestion of skilled labor.

But inability to please permanently does not restrain these diversions from drawing temporary patrons in great numbers; indeed, billiards and pool have their day to the extent that hardly any city youth enters upon manhood without at least trying his hand at the cue. Certainly, then, the inevitable experiment is promisingly made during the earlier teens and in the club, where many a young fellow

tires of these games and so forestalls enticements to dangerous resorts that the games would otherwise create later on.

"When a fellow has learned to make good shots the fun is about over," was the pithy statement of the situation once made by a fifteen-year-old *blasé* of the cue. Assuredly it is satisfactory that this youthful immune from billiard and pool tables had made himself such amidst the safe surroundings of the writer's club. Like many another he might have waited longer, "gone further, and fared worse."

What has just been written will warn the manager not to count on the present pastimes for a continuance in full of the very large helpfulness they (especially pool) afford during the first season or two. And still, in this matter, the boys' establishment will never have to imitate the young men's club which is often obliged to remove the tables as having degenerated into mere encumbrances. When placed before the younger set the present games, though continually jilted by former admirers, steadily make enough friends among the green newcomers to remain in permanent operation.

They thus become of lasting assistance by occupying both the players and a much larger number of spectators, while adding to the rooms the lively cheerfulness of the clicking balls and of audible interest in their movements. Indeed no large club can cope with the double task of drawing subjects and maintaining discipline unless, by means akin to that just noted, it is able to impress visitors as being a place in which there is always "something doing."

## SECTION VII—FILLING THE EXCHEQUER

If order be maintained so that games can operate without interruption, pool play (and billiards, probably) is easily turned into a source of revenue. Rather we might say that its services in that respect are forced on the administration, for a small charge to be paid by losers is necessary as adding zest to the game while preventing the cues of rival would-be participants from assuming the perpendicular of strife rather than the horizontal of peaceful endeavor. However, the successful maintenance of this tax entails the placing of an ever present and, therefore, paid assistant, attentive to details and especially to the debts—they should be limited to a dime or two—which our temporarily embarrassed capitalists must be allowed to contract.

It is fully understood that this proceeding will fail of suiting many who, in organizing the young, have for a leading object the inculcation of saving habits. However, even such philanthropists must admit that spendthrifts will have to be trapped before being reformed and that financially equipped captives are held imperfectly, if at all, unless through some agency relieving them of their pennies.

There is considerable significance in the fact that the pocket of the beardless "submerged tenth" is the only portion of its raiment kept in repair; and be assured the small coin that so often accumulates surprisingly in those receptacles burns with steady desire for attractions that were far better shunned. Scruple in the above matter ought, then, to disap-

pear before the consideration that the "well-to-do" of our city undergrowth are quick in finding at the club either an outlet for their money or an outlet for themselves.

Meanwhile, there is nothing to prevent practical encouragement to thrift from operating side by side with "pay games"; only let there be no heart-break over the possible failure of this or of kindred educational efforts provided the "wedding" be "filled with guests" most of whom will be found, by the coming "King," sufficiently clothed.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE FINANCIAL QUESTION:—ITS ECONOMIC SIDE

#### SECTION I—A PROBLEM THAT CAN NOT BE IGNORED

IN TRANSFERRING attention to the commonplace subject of material support for boys' unions, we undeniably step to a lower plane but not without receiving implied approbation from the highest possible authority. "Which of you," our divine Master has said, "having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it?"

Now the circumspection here recommended is almost certainly required whenever God's own "towers," whether in the material or the social order, are to be built; their erection for the benefit of the world presupposes as a rule some of the world's money-leverage. And this is unreservedly true of flourishing juvenile church organizations. It is utter blindness to suppose that the common run of youngsters are prepared, like many of their elders, to unite inexpensively for the sole purpose of holding meetings characterized by nothing more costly than prayers. Without cost you can not have attractions; without attractions you can not have the boys.

It follows, then, much as we might wish the con-

trary, that the plainest of business details pertaining to the maintenance of juvenile religious organizations most rightfully claim place in these pages; for anybody who aims at encouraging workers is under constraint to show that the society's debit page need not carry any disquieting figures and that its credit page can be sufficiently and easily filled.

## SECTION II—TESTING THE WORLD'S MARTS

And since, by the very fact of entering upon the present matter, I am convicted of having in a way "talked shop," an actual glance at the prices of things can not take this book into the literary basement much further than it has already gone. Accordingly, I would, in company with profoundly practical readers, note the market values of recreative articles that preceding pages have proposed.

If my various drawing features be taken in the order of their expense, the ones likely to prove most menacing to the purse, and which, consequently, deserve first attention, are those entitled "gifts." However, any objects that are to serve as presents to boys, since they will be used in quantities, can generally be obtained at wholesale prices.<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, a dealer in skates, moved by charity or by even business motives, receives sodality lads arriving successively and with the necessary certificate in hand, fits them out according to the sizes required, and afterward sends

<sup>1</sup>When there is question of receiving presents of baseballs or bats, our young friends, even if well advanced in their teens, are nearly as well pleased with articles of boys' size as with the more expensive ones.

the management a bill in which the articles supplied are charged by the dozen.

In particular, tickets admitting to the baseball and other athletic fields ought to be secured at largely reduced rates. The men in charge of public sports are always disposed to encourage junior spectatorship; our younger brethren take up but little room, are always stanch supporters of the home team, and give the games no end of advertisement about town. Hence the common practice of issuing half-price tickets for boys. Hence, furthermore, the fair prospect that a leader having a large number of youngsters in his following will secure from the managers of the local diamond, especially in any smaller town, a very considerable reduction from the already reduced boys' rates.

### SECTION III—ADDITIONAL BUSINESS MATTERS

Turning to the evening parade, we encounter at the outset a comparatively heavy item in the requisite stock of tin torches. Stamping works can supply them at two or three dollars a dozen, but a sufficient number of these being once provided, the remaining expenses of a night outing for say three hundred paraders are by no means onerous. Five dollars' worth of kerosene illuminates to the very skies, while one person working perhaps three or four days is able to fill and afterward empty the torch-cans. Add to the foregoing a little something for odds and ends, and it will be seen that for fifteen or twenty dollars, exclusive of musicians' charges, the organizer can send forth a small army of braves in battle array.

General athletics, depending as they do on the active limbs and tireless lungs of youth, bear financial scrutiny admirably. Conducted in an offhand fashion, field sports involve an outlay so slight as to hardly merit calculation. To be sure prizes are always required, but these are usually obtainable in the form of donations. Meanwhile, the same contests occurring with some pomp and circumstance indoors on a long winter evening will justify an admission charge for the relatives and friends of the boys and hence can easily be looked to for more than the payment of expenses.

And this good word regarding general athletics is to be repeated in favor of badges; the latter articles, when of comparatively inexpensive quality, can hardly be used along the lines indicated as making them acceptable and helpful to boys, without, *ipso facto*, yielding some little profit. Thus, for instance, two of the three celluloid buttons adopted by the author are obtainable at about thirteen dollars a thousand. It is, then, clear that any selling prices sufficient to enhance such ornaments in the eyes of the wearers, must greatly exceed what the ornaments will have cost. Furthermore, a rising scale of prices, if adopted in order to set off different varieties of a graded emblem, will necessarily swell the profits.

We can, therefore, close this section with the cheering reflection that there is such a thing as finding an occasional attraction which will not only do for itself, but may actually contribute toward the maintenance of the rest.

SECTION IV—"PAYING THE PIPER"

How much will it all cost? Unfortunately, a definite answer to this very important question is impossible; the "sinking fund" must vary with local circumstances.

One patron enjoys facilities for free outings or entertainments which a brother worker can secure only on a business basis. Or again, some leaders are so placed that they can manage by means of certain attractions obtainable at cheap rates, while others find themselves forced to use inducements that are more costly. Then the situation changes with progress made in rendering the religious meetings themselves congenial to the members. Accordingly as this triumph is achieved, natural attractions are less needful and their cost becomes of lesser consequence. And, finally, there arises occasionally the rare magnetic man (not addressed here—simply in my way as usual) who gathers boys at the very lowest price, that is by the attraction of his own winning words.

But while these varied conditions forbid the acceptance of any definite outlay as uniform in the societies, the writer believes that the maximum of annual "living expenses" need never be more than a dollar a boy. This statement is made confidently enough by one whose own adherents—four hundred of them—are kept in wedded bliss with their organization at half of the figure just given.

The above calculation looks to a sufficiency of attractive features whether selected from those of the present pages or found elsewhere. It covers also the current expenses for printing, mailing, etc.,



necessitated by the society's religious work. But the estimate does not provide for such items as heating and lighting nor for the outlay occasioned by quasi-permanent articles that must be purchased once and for all—an equipment of torches or library books, fittings for entertainment place, club-rooms, and so on.

#### SECTION V—CHARITY'S STUMBLING-BLOCKS

It is hoped that this view of the financial situation is reassuring to those who, in reading my plans for campaigning against Satan, have been murmuring, "*nervos belli, pecuniam infinitam.*" A dollar—more or less—a boy is, after all, a passably small expenditure even did the boy himself make no contribution thereunto. And certainly that sum is little enough to sacrifice for the privilege of easily forming Christian men. It is a price, moreover, which in view of the material church support to be given later by these men, should, from even a quasi-business viewpoint, constitute a good investment.

However, to repeat an earlier admission, it may seldom happen that tyros gathered in accordance with present methods will achieve self-support. And here I would not wish to seem unconscious of the difficulty organizers must nowadays find in obtaining, at least from the general Catholic public, any supplementary financial aid which may be needful. The cause of our young friends does not appeal with great force to the great majority of those excellent souls who give habitually toward church undertakings, and whose generously small but nu-

merous contributions are the congregation's main support.

One reason for this apathy is that the boys' society, even while in point of fact steadily attaching its members to their religion and to the use of the sacraments, makes but feeble approach to the ideal set up for it by well-disposed ordinary minds. The common run of good people, overrating the significance of orderly external conduct on the part of juveniles, imagine that if any spiritual good is being really accomplished in rough, mischievous youngsters, it must necessarily appear in their gentler and more thoughtful deportment.

This test is, of course, absurdly false; and the worker who hopes by creating a large group of small saints, to meet it, is one the bright green of whose inexperience must quickly turn to the bluest of chagrin. When young fellows are banded together, there is always enough constant disorder on the part of the mischievous ones and enough intermittent mischief on the part of the orderly ones, that the entire contingent, no matter how much really raised heavenward, will to most observers never be elsewhere than under a cloud. Hence, a serious difficulty in securing from the rank and file of the faithful any notable material support for juvenile fraternities—the boys are never “up to the mark.”

But a more radical difficulty lies in the way; it is that the very idea of special attentions to city male juniors is appreciated by only a thoughtful few. It seems really very strange, but, as intercourse with loyal lay brethren demonstrates, the bulk of practical Catholics in America little realize the ac-

tual growing defection of our men from religious duties; they, consequently, fail to appreciate the dread menace to the entire American church of the future which this defection implies.

Much less do the bulk of our God-fearing people bring the peril home to themselves, as one to which their own offspring are exposed. Indeed, well-informed and excellent Catholic fathers and mothers of boys, even when aware that a large proportion of our masculine adults are dropping all practice of the Faith, very frequently fail to take in the situation largely enough to counteract the suggestions of parental pride. The danger, as contemplated by these observers, threatens not their own sweet, devout, and promising little fellows, but awaits other people's little fellows, not nearly so sweet, devout, and promising—as everybody can plainly see.

At the present moment, then, boy-saving endeavor is unfortunately far from having gained its due place in the Catholic heart. The work is commonly underrated as if a more or less laudable undertaking of merely secondary importance, and is rarely recognized as being what it really is—one of our essential preservatives against general shipwreck. Accordingly, some verbal applause is the best encouragement to juvenile societies that most of our zealous brethren are now ready to give. In favor of such societies, people readily open their lips; their purses less easily.

Furthermore, even among those who realize that city boys ought to be religiously banded together, some utterly fail to take in the financial phase of the situation. There is a frequently-accepted view that pious societies, if not an actual source of rev-

enue to their respective church-homes, should always be at least self-supporting. Doubtless this ruling justly holds, generally speaking, when there is question of fraternities for grown people, but certainly it proves inapplicable to bodies enrolling only boys.

Even the pastors of souls occasionally make the mistake here indicated. The writer has known more than one priest (by no means wanting in generosity nor resources but simply misled by the above habitual way of viewing things) to abstain from ever adding the encouragement of a single dollar to the small sums which the organized juniors of his parish could raise.

Let us not, in this all-important affair, be "penny wise and pound foolish." Boys in their teens, though adults in embryo, are not adults; and, as regards their needs, resources, and requisite treatment, boys differ from adults about as much as if, belonging to a different *genus rationale*, they had fallen to us from some planet far removed.

#### SECTION VI—ENCOURAGING FACTS

These views, contributed toward a more alert Catholic understanding of things, should dishearten no one who must seek charitable aid for the object proposed. Prospects are much improved by the reflection that in every community there will be found at least a few thoughtful brethren who, sufficiently alive to the need of organized work for juniors, will, on appeal, cheerfully contribute something to its support.

And, bless us! the sum that charity must be

called upon to supply, is anything but a fortune. As has been shown, nearly all of our young friends will, by due payments, contribute annually to the union's maintenance at least a "mighty" half dollar. Now to be sure, a single lad's ten nickels are of but slight help to the cause, but then many lads bring many nickels,—and, as the Scotch bard might seem to have meant, many nickels "make a muckle." It is fair to place the boys' own yearly offerings at about forty dollars for every one hundred names on the roll; and this done we can easily calculate the supplementary fund charity must create.

Any thriving association with a membership of, say two hundred, will contribute something like eighty dollars toward the two hundred which, as is here assumed, is its largest total of expense. Hence the additional sum to be collected for the adjustment of the finances can not be much more than one hundred and twenty dollars all told.

Clearly, then, the "outside" financial help to be secured by the worker is comparatively insignificant. And, since, in even the most arduous of enterprises "where there's a will there's a way," assuredly in this limited undertaking, success awaits him who has a heart that pities, and lips wherewith to plead and a hat to pass around.

#### SECTION VII—AND FINALLY

Inspiration for the task proposed should be drawn from what we are already accomplishing in behalf of a kindred cause—Catholic education. Beyond all doubt, the importance of Christian schools is lost to a large proportion of the faithful



every bit as much as the importance of boys' societies is lost on the faithful, as a whole. But, notwithstanding the difficulties thereby placed in the way, we are maintaining and developing our educational system, and this at an expense out of all proportion with the outlay either present or prospective, involved in organized work for city juniors.

Heaven forbid that in the face of this sustained devotion to one work of prime importance, organizers upholding another should falter! Think of it! Christian education in our cities costs each of the parishes concerned at the average rate, doubtless, of more than four thousand dollars a year: and yet charity, everywhere earnestly besought to bear this great burden, everywhere responds.

Shall, then, the boys' fraternity, which cares fairly well for both the juniors who have quitted the Catholic school and the juniors who have never entered it, be permitted in any locality to languish and perish for lack of the one-fortieth part of the eleemosynary favor that our average Catholic school requires and obtains?

## CHAPTER XVI

### L'ENFANT TERRIBLE

#### SECTION I—CHILD MEMBERSHIP A SERIOUS DRAW- BACK TO JUVENILE SOCIETIES

THE question of attractions having been treated, our further course will be to consider how juniors, after letting themselves be drawn within the radius of the patron's influence, can be most effectively organized and bettered.

Here we must first of all give attention to criteria of eligibility applicable to membership. To be sure my pronounced advocacy of societies for only boys in their teens incurs the disadvantage of departing from more common usage which admits immediately after first communion, or, in our country and time, at twelve, eleven, or even ten years. Nevertheless, a few considerations may show that toleration of these younger guests at the Holy Table not only ruins the body which they join, but plays havoc over the entire field of organized work for youth.

In juvenile associations premature membership, besides its previously noted result of hampering discipline, frightens away older followers—the very lads whose perseverance would bear the richest fruit. We must ever keep in mind that the purpose of a boys' society is best secured in subjects remaining, from fifteen till eighteen, while really beginning to be young men. Theirs are the years

of actual transition from boyhood to manhood—the critical period that should chiefly occupy spiritual friends and organizations, since it is the very period during which the powers of evil battle most fiercely for permanent control. Now the enrolment of sweet little chaps of ten or eleven summers may indeed prove advantageous to the chaps themselves; but on the older and far more desirable element it can not operate otherwise than as a notice to quit.

As everybody knows, age discrepancies suffice, in boyish intercourse, to establish dividing lines quite as absolute as any drawn in the adult world by sharp contrasts of education, wealth, or social standing. While the “touch-me-not” limit can not, and need not, be determined to a nicety, it seems clear that a youth usually scorns real fellowship with any one about five years his junior. Apparently this rule is in no wise relaxed by the general mix-up of a society. No matter how well organized, adolescent mortals still refuse a smile of fraternal recognition to those who have been laughing in this vale of tears some sixty moons less than themselves.

The above norm seems to hold all along the youthful line; while remotely budding public men some three years short of voting age loftily curve their noses at nonentities nearing only life’s thirteenth mile stone, another junior aristocracy, having reached sixteen, is busy turning correspondingly cold shoulders on upstarts under eleven. Hence, where admission is granted to early first communicants, our smooth-faced elders half way between twelve and twenty must perforce subject the fairer,

rosier-cheeked junior increase to a bright-eyed, sensitive watch expressive of the fact that the measure of honorable endurance is being filled. Finally, at the decisive moment in which patience begins to lose caste with the virtues, these injured veterans, assuming a dignified air of *noblesse oblige*, arise, wrap themselves in the gray of a severe, unapproachable seniority and forthwith depart.

What, then, becomes of them? Justly concerned over a general and most inopportune withdrawal from the junior ranks, those in charge frequently endeavor to provide for the deserters by securing them admission into the young men's association. It is soon discovered, however, that many lads half-way in their teens steadily decline the invitation, "go up higher," simply because their slender stock of piety and good will is insufficient for even the gentle shock of transition from one roll-book to another. With better management, they might have been induced to make a prolonged stay as tolerable, and even faithful, members of the junior body; but, in quitting its ranks, they have withdrawn themselves finally and forever from all devotional societies.

Hence, under prevailing methods, the boys' union is at great disadvantage. Deprived of the subjects that should be chiefly succored, it secures results of only minor importance in the far less endangered juniors lately admitted to the Heavenly Banquet; and these, in turn, are fated to be likewise driven off when they reach the very age at which they could most profitably remain.

SECTION II—CHILD MEMBERSHIP IN JUVENILE  
SOCIETIES ACTS RUINOUSLY ON EVEN YOUNG  
MEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

Moreover, there is no consolatory gain, but rather additional misfortune, in the fact that most youngsters, on shaking off the dust of their proper department, are very eager to be enrolled with young men. If thus prematurely promoted, they only create in the second organization and for their elders the very abomination that has driven themselves from the junior society's pale. Persons of mature years will not and morally speaking can not enter into any alliance involving fellowship with mere boys.

No wonder that those in charge are discouraged by the resulting general state of affairs. While the boys' society fails to hold the subjects that are most wanted, the young men's fraternity hardly attracts young men at all. Nevertheless, this disastrous situation must frequently arise pending the general establishment of conditions under which juveniles, during their most endangered years, will cheerfully remain in the younger body rather than be tempted to push themselves into the higher organization to the exclusion of its intended adult members.

To sum up: The policy now prevailing in this matter adheres to a semblance of religious proprieties at the expense of actual spiritual gain and consequently should be changed. Instead of beginning with first communicants and then accepting as many older lads as will tolerate the former, we ought to start at the other end of the line, securing,



at all hazards, the adolescent sinners still of attractive age, and then rigorously barring whatever grades of "holy innocents" prove too young for the latter.

### SECTION III—CONCERNING BOYS NOT YET IN THEIR TEENS

This view of the situation chiefly has led the writer to believe that thirteen years should be required in candidates. Once it is admitted that stripplings between fifteen and eighteen are in the most critical stage of development and primarily deserving of assistance the taste of the oldest of this category must be consulted, come what may. And, as already advanced, associates of eighteen in their sensitiveness to junior encroachment bar all lads who are apparently some five years younger than themselves.

Doubtless an occasional newly-ordained priest praiseworthy about to gather boys, feels diffident as to his ability to control youths of seventeen or eighteen and in consequence is tempted to proceed, for a while anyway, with only subjects of fifteen or under. Obviously the new organizer, should he yield to this fear, will find nothing in the foregoing boys' rule of age toleration to prevent him from accepting little fellows of even ten years; but is not such early membership destined to become a hindrance rather than a help to management? The present pages, answering this question affirmatively, earnestly strive to dissuade the apprehensive coming leader from choosing the contemplated course.

Reassurance has been given, it is hoped, by re-

marks on the disciplinary side of our task and on clerical competency for the same, as well as by the suggestion that the beginner in the apostolate can amply safeguard things by merely limiting the number of his followers. In fact the latter idea, which will reappear in a near-by chapter, "The Waiting List," seems to fully answer the difficulty now before us, thereby enabling inexperienced workers to join with the author in recruiting from the older class, whose membership is paramountly fruitful and desirable, rather than from our dear young friends not yet thirteen.

In view of the great common good obtained by enforcing this exclusion, it by no means seems that temporary denial of society attentions to little first communicants should be regretted. Resulting losses, while amply justified anyway, can not be great. At least as regards frequentation of the sacraments, such tyros, being in their first fervor, are likely to find in the example of enrolled companions and the prospect of later enrolment for themselves nearly as much inspiration to approach the altar as could arise from actual membership. Besides it should be possible to have some of these would-be members (perhaps all of them whose ambition may seem in any way justified) attend the meetings in a special capacity to be explained in the proper place.

#### SECTION IV—AGE SEMBLANCE AS A CRITERION OF MEMBERSHIP. ITS STRONG POINTS

Any one regulating admissions by the birthdays of applicants and applying, let us suppose, the

writer's favorite limit, thirteen, may easily find himself inclined to enlist at this age completed, not really, but apparently. It by no means seems necessary that an eligible candidate should be actually in his teens, if only fully able to pass as such. Frequently boys of twelve or less are quite as developed in body and mind as the average lad of thirteen, and there is no valid reason for the exclusion of such youngsters ranking as they do by inclination, ways of thinking, and companionship with those of eligible years. On the other hand, lads of thirteen years or more are sometimes so deficient physically and mentally that, for all society purposes, they should be treated as children of ten or eleven.

From these considerations it is clear that the thirteenth year actually completed, if taken as a criterion, labors under a double disadvantage. On the one hand, it sometimes opens the door to chaps undersized in body and mind, with the unfavorable results detailed above; on the other hand, it frequently excludes a class of precocious youngsters whose early membership would be advantageous to the society and to themselves.

Admission on age semblance again commends itself inasmuch as removing all need of testimony as to time of birth. Many boys, quite unable to classify themselves in this respect, can not give any closer tally of their age in winters and summers than of their recent experience in the matter of every-day springs and falls. And, what is far more surprising, parents themselves are frequently at sea concerning the years of their offspring.

Once a lively specimen of Young America applying to me for membership laid claim to fourteen

years. "But, John," I remonstrated, "are you not, perhaps, mistaken? Your mother has told me that you are not yet twelve." "Why, Father!" exclaimed the lad in a tone of unmixed amazement, "my mother don't know how old I am. She gets mixed on 'rithmetic an' I've always got to tell her how old she is."

Another reason for preferring age semblance is the fact that unhappy deflections from the moral code will sometimes result, if admissions are based simply on the boys' statements as to their standing in years. Many a lad, consciously under thirteen but allured by prospects of joining older juveniles in a popular organization, will begin pious society life very inauspiciously by taking passing liberties with the eighth precept and fibbing his way into the ranks.

It will then be safer, if possible, to judge the candidate not from his own declarations concerning himself, but by what he is "as others see him." However, it must not be imagined for a moment that I would have the applicant think his word doubted. Volunteered information, even of suspicious character, ought to be received with outward respect; for, even while necessarily convinced that boys are not over skilful in truth-telling, their patron should resolutely believe his clients to the last ditch.

Whoever would be influential for the improvement of the weak must stand to them, not as a detective ready to unearth iniquity, but as their benign counselor expectant of finding innocence. In personal intercourse, sustained anticipation of hearing only the truth is itself a telling rebuke to prevari-

cating youngsters; a rebuke that does not destroy but rather increases their willingness to profit by your public condemnations of mendacity.

SECTION V—AGE SEMBLANCE AS A CRITERION OF  
MEMBERSHIP. ITS WEAK POINT

While the above reasons vindicate the enforcement of an age limit by reference to the appearances of years rather than to their reality, nevertheless workers adopting the former process may find themselves, in practice, badly handicapped by inability to render satisfactory decisions regarding the claims of candidates. Amid so many varieties of voice, face, manner, and character it is frequently impossible to discern apparent age with anything like desirable precision. Sometimes the director's estimate will be contradicted by that of others; not to speak of different appreciations regarding the same individual which he will himself make on successive occasions.

And, then, changes of dress or companionship alter a lad's appearance exceedingly. Often enough, deceived by a candidate's manly coat, derby hat, and sponsor-escort of older boys, I have accepted him as easily passing for thirteen, only to meet the same youngster later wearing a child's collar and cap, playing with tots and looking for all the world less than eleven. He must, indeed, be a rare judge of human nature who can in this business rely on the above indications of years, and reach decisions uniformly approved by his older followers or even by himself.

From these facts it follows that, notwithstanding



ing the splendid advantages theoretically connected with admission on age semblance, the plan, so far as yet presented, may easily prove in actual test more hurtful than useful. The director's verdicts, accordingly as they favor liberality or strict observance, are likely to constitute *casus belli* for either offended veteran members or rejected applicants of high ambition. Worse still, when guilty of inconsistently varied decisions, he will be condemned by the unermind bench as one who "regards the persons of men" and will thereby stand convicted of the boy leader's unpardonable sin—favoritism. What, then, is to be done?

#### SECTION VI—A NEW CENTURY EXPEDIENT

Up to the point now reached the present chapter is little more than a narrative of the course pursued and of the difficulties actually encountered by the writer in early practice. Having at the outset, like every one else, accepted little first communicants, he was soon forced by senior desertions to adopt age limitation; and, beginning with the thirteenth year actually completed, quickly learned to prefer its semblance.

However, as just described, this latter criterion proved of clumsy operation and involved much judicial floundering detrimental to the cause. Finally the exigencies of the situation seemed to justify the bold departure of admitting on age appearance rated no longer by features, companionship, manly bearing, etc., but simply by measurement of the applicant's stature.

At this announcement many eyebrows, doubtless,

are raised in amazement. An easy effort of the imagination places me within hearing of startled voices that exclaim, "Is the man daft? Would he really undertake to fill pious societies, the same as new clothes, by actually measuring customers?"

Yes, dear shocked reader, in filling a boys' religious organization, I would "take the measure" of candidates, not in any mere colloquial sense of forming eye estimates of disposition or intention, but by really sizing up the extent of material humanity between the crown of the head and the soles of the feet as revealed by the prosaic testimony of a commonplace yard stick. I am, besides, daring enough to hope that one or another heroic associate may find it well to do the same. So pray lift not hands or voice higher before reading what follows and with at least this concession, that boys, admittedly a very peculiar portion of our somewhat peculiar race, are often best led by methods wholly inapplicable to the rest of mankind.

## CHAPTER XVII

### A PHYSICAL CRITERION FOR MEMBERSHIP

#### SECTION I—MEASUREMENT OF STATURE APPLIED TO CANDIDACY

CORPORAL measurement, as everybody must admit, successfully obviates the difficulties just described as having forced its adoption. Removing all need of guesswork and query, it tells the apparent age easily and accurately. Applicants simply submit themselves to the testimony of an object fixed in accordance with requirements, and show themselves at once as being of eligible high standing or disqualifying "short comings."

But, while this method of enrolling is both convenient and helpful, it is again strongly commended because in perfect harmony with boyish ideas. It is an every-day fact that, in juvenile male circles, social standing and physical standing are united by a close alliance deeply founded in the early aspirations of every individual. From the dawn of reason a boy leans heavily on the animal side, and, above all things else, is anxious to grow. Inches are to him as fortunes to the business man; as worlds of fame in professional life. Looking down on an older sister and standing even with his mother become delightful experiences that count as milestones on the roadway to a supremely important goal.

Nothing else can fully replace this early idea of "getting up in the world." Grace and charm of youth, so winsome in the eyes of others, are rated by their possessor as consummate nonsense. While yet a "sweet little fellow" he is much bored at being so called. He washes his face only on compulsion, and then makes a second stand before consenting to arrange his fair, but disordered, locks. Vain are the counsels pointing out a short cut to manliness, through the cultivation of dignified and considerate gentleness in action. Our half-tamed subject, up to the last of his boyhood, shocks elderly advisers by storming forbidden places, disturbing the peace of quiet hours, and smashing whatever breakable objects fall to his hands.

Neatness in apparel is another immaturity specific which, though never weighed, is, from the first, found wanting. "Dreff'n up" is in itself quite an ordeal for the small boy; and, as preliminary to "stayin' dreff'd up," becomes the initial throes of a prolonged agony. Neither does sisterly love of finery, which he never can fathom, exercise perceptible influence in a contrary direction. Rather, with open scorn of girlish ways, he flaunts an outspoken predilection for old clothes—the more used-up the better—as occasioning less maternal fuss when soiled or torn. And, then, it is really a case of love's labor lost if nature has supplied our young friend with a voice; for, with no special pride even in strains that angels might envy, he is quite content to "holler" when with the "fellers," and to whistle if alone.

Muscular strength, it must be admitted, the pos-

essor esteems as a gift by no means "to be sneezed at." This important acquisition stands in well for games and gymnastic display, not to mention graver interests of life dependent on fisticuffs. Indeed, physical energy might prove a rival favorite with stature itself, were the former always in evidence instead of appearing only on occasions. Mental gifts, on the contrary, are thoughtlessly underrated. Simply to be tall is the youngster's *sum-mum bonum*, and it is only when his head is in the air about as high as the same will ever go, that he usually bethinks himself of taking any considerable pride in the contents real or supposed.

Since, then, a boy comes to be satisfied with himself mainly through his own stature, he usually looks to the stature of his associates more than to anything else when making himself satisfied with them. Accordingly, an organization has already entered into close partnership with the disposition of the older lads, if it is pledged to keep the small fry out.

Moreover, the proposed method can be made exceedingly helpful to good deportment. A youngster is never more stimulated to copy the bearing of grown people than when found big enough for something wherein other lads are rated too small. Hence, the director makes an excellent bid for good order by merely keeping it before his hearers that little boys are excluded because giddy and unable to take care of themselves.

To be sure, the exhortation, "Behave like men" is rather trite; and, therefore, usually without special force in juvenile circles at school and elsewhere.



Nevertheless, it has a salutary effect, when used as the expression of an active policy that accepts members proved men by a standard of manliness which they themselves have chosen, and rigorously excludes as children all those in whom this selected sign of maturity does not appear.

## SECTION II—METHOD VERSUS MAGNETISM AGAIN

The facilities and gains secured by only this one of the many expedients that can be suggested are respectfully submitted in confirmation of my view that boy-saving endeavor, by systematically adapting itself to juvenile nature, accomplishes as much as it could possibly effect through personal magnetism, if not more.

After the winsome patron has sinned against public sentiment by enrolling "kids" in stature, albeit of sufficient mental development, it may be that his innate charm avails to counteract the effect of this offense. But, if so, the victor will have gained no more through rare personal attractiveness than is accomplished by the non-magnetic plodder who, with common-sense deference to youthful aspirations, keeps all "kids," no matter how brainy, at a distance.

The former of these directors, having blindly fostered a spirit of mischief and desertion, is luckily gifted to hold the same in check; the latter, on the contrary, never lets that untoward spirit arise. He achieves success by simply accepting the plain fact of juvenile sociology that a boy before the boy public always wins on the length of his garments what he could never obtain by the size of his hat.

SECTION III—THE PROPOSED METHOD ACTUALLY  
TESTED

While the foregoing novel system is easily supported in theory, suggestions for reducing the same to practice labor under disadvantage. It lacks the confirmation of extensive trial. Like other beginners, I can point to but a single instance of application; this has covered many years and with splendid results, but after all it is only my own poor little personal experience, out all alone in the wide apostolic world. Nevertheless, zeal for the cause now dictates that the isolated, hidden enterprise and its outcome be removed from under the bushel and boldly placed on a candlestick for the encouragement of souls ready to do and dare.

During some twenty years, then, and under the writer's personal supervision, hundreds of boys have been enrolled by corporal measurement. With unbroken uniformity of seriousness and good will, they have ever accepted this means of entering their pious society as the most natural thing in the world. In fact their respectful acceptance of the process suggests that it stands to them in a halo of sanctity, as universal in the Church, and, like holy water or blessed candles, derived from apostolic times.

Dating from the child's first clear knowledge of the situation, becoming "big 'nuff fer de serdalitee" is a future event of events in our local junior life, quite comparable to the crowning and unspeakable glory of getting into long pants. In consequence, many a careful housewife is dismayed to find that her ambitious Master Tom has conspicuously

marked the required height over the domestic wainscoting with a view to frequent measurements in computation of the interval after which corporal development will be profitable both for this world and the next.

This system has always accomplished in practice whatever is claimed for it in theory. And there is special encouragement in the fact that the chief purpose in view has ever been grandly realized; for our veterans, most tolerant of the junior recruits, commonly persevere contentedly in the sodality until eighteen years of age or more, thus gaining unspeakably by their prolonged stay besides furnishing an abundance of senior leadership. Most earnestly, then, is this single but successful trial offered for the consideration of others. And, while the proposed method is admittedly unable to find favor with all workers, it assuredly ought not be hastily buried alive on the single, primeval charge—which had kept us in the stone age—"that such was never done before."

#### SECTION IV—TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Though not devised for the entertainment of directors, this measuring process proves one of the welcomest recreative features of our apostolate. The small boy's triumphant glee on finally reaching the oft-vainly tried mark merits a skilful brush. In contrast with this, there are, however, occasions of wrecked ambition, in which the reliable, business-like trial shelf is subjected to glances of withering scorn by indignant young gentlemen declared to be a little below requirements. The remark just made

recalls how one of the first lads I ever rejected, instead of idly chewing the cud of disappointment, had recourse to his ingenuity for success in a second attempt. It afterward transpired that, in the interim, he provided his shoes with new, thick soles.

This proved to be the forerunner of a number of little stratagems sure to be discoverable wherever the above way of doing may be applied; for the semi-religious character of the ordeal does not prevent the parties concerned from accounting it, like love and war, a department of endeavor in which all is fair. As rarely interfering seriously with the object in view, such tricks may as a rule be overlooked; nevertheless, care must be taken to restrain youthful enterprise from annihilating the test altogether. Hence, it is well to measure, not by a feebly self-assertive mark, but under a projecting shelf that clearly designates the heads of the elect by receiving them with an unmistakable bump. Furthermore, candidates should always be placed facing the wall and with heels in full evidence. Otherwise, in the heart of the crisis, attacks of nervous exaltation are likely to overwhelm these temporarily excitable parts of their anatomy.

Finally, those interested in the expedient will naturally ask, what degree of stature is proposed as the standard? How tall must an eligible lad be? Inconsistent as it may seem, I have no very decided views on this vital portion of the subject. It is easier merely to supply data for decision by repeating that candidates should be tall enough for companionship with youths of seventeen or eighteen, or, what comes to the same, that they should touch a mark characteristic of lads of thirteen. Put in

either way, however, this statement indicates a height of vague determination, which may, moreover, vary in different places. For the writer's locality, it seems accurately enough placed—and in his practice is fixed—four feet ten inches from the floor.

#### SECTION V—WHAT ABOUT THE LILLIPUTIANS?

This chapter supports its immediate predecessor by answering a question sure to be raised now concerning a new class of small-boy failures; these are the unfortunates known to have begun the teens but who, for all that, stand short of the required mark. What is to be done with them? I answer that, while all possible allowance must be made for undersized lads really of sufficient age, care of pygmy interests must not outstrip zeal for the greatest good of the greatest number.

The fact that normally developed young fellows well in their teens often enter individually into companionship with stunted unfortunates also in their teens does not permit the organizer to usher all of the latter class into the fraternity. Boys, collectively free from special influences of close residence, family friendships, etc., will, as a body, ostracize the same physically retarded youngsters whom, separately and by private concession, they accept. Special admissions, then, of chaps small for their age produce untoward results unless, in each instance and to the satisfaction of the entire group of sensitive, older associates, the undersized newcomer can make it clear that he has really entered the teens.



In passing judgment on this matter a small organization with well-acquainted neighbors filling the roll-book is more indulgent than one recruited from different parts of the town. Members of the latter body are so unfamiliar with one another as to magnify any vision of enrolled dwarfishness into the advance shadow of a dreaded infantile invasion. When, therefore, the sodality is large, a "shorty" must be denied admission until evident maturity of voice, features, etc., forces exclusive elders to recognize him as a real peer merely victimized by circumstances entirely beyond control.

In practice these secondary age marks will hardly do substitute gateway service for missing stature before the completion of the fourteenth year. And, meanwhile, abbreviated humanity can be accepted more safely and even invested with actual dignity if a tradition be nourished in the society to the effect that its childlike appearing members are invariably among the oldest boys of all.

Nevertheless it is abundantly true that my proposed criterion will occasionally blackball a lilliputian whose taller acquaintances of even lower age are unhesitatingly accepted. Even so. After due reflection, we must admit that the former's temporary exclusion for the general good is usually a light trial meriting no deep sympathy. The juvenile stunted in body is, in most instances, of correspondingly tardy mental development; his school work, ideas, and disposition all being in keeping with the lesser age suggested by lesser physical standing.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In confirmation of this view we may note that some leading educators, after extensive investigations, propose having chil-

Moreover, mere corporal kinship is such a factor in boyish circles that the dwarfed lad is, as a rule, wholly content with the company of well-developed little chaps of equal stature who are, of course, his juniors. In fact, he generally prefers to lord it over these, believing, like another Cæsar, that one is better off as "boss" in the hamlet of small folk than as coadjutor "boss" in the greater community of adolescence.

Besides, a director easily keeps a list of these rejected admirers; and by occasionally calling them to a share of the society's material windfalls can soften the little sting of unrequited affection, while at the same time maintaining the stature requirements so helpful to the perseverance of his older followers.

dren begin their school career, not at some fixed age, but when able to meet a physical test.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE ROUGHER ELEMENT

#### SECTION I—SHOULD JUVENILE “TOUGHS” BE ENROLLED?

WITH scarcely any reservation, I would answer this query affirmatively, provided the “toughs,” like wild creatures for the tamer, can be caught young, say at sixteen or earlier. In the present matter, however, the age question seldom assumes practical importance, as unfortunates old enough to be quasi-irredeemable will scarcely offer themselves for enrolment.

“What then!” exclaim social purists, “is your high physical standard required only for association with one that is low morally? Are we not speaking of pious societies?” Yes—of societies pious like the Church, whose holiness is transcendently displayed in the retention and improvement of the fallen; of societies pious like Christ Himself, come “not to call the just but sinners to penance.” Assuredly, the religious organizer of youth should ever be mindful that “they that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick.” While votaries of worldly greatness look with eaglelike steadiness into suns of earthly wealth and position, it is for him who would labor with the lowly toiler of Nazareth to contemplate unflinchingly all that is poorest and most abandoned.

Therefore, prize a boy’s friendship and confi-

dence less for the good you see in him than for the evil you can take out of him. Rejoice, as one possessed of apostolic fitness, if your heart beats all the warmer welcome to a youngster's advances because he has a dirty face, ragged clothes, drunken parents, an irreligious home, and is reputed "a good hand at swearing."

As youthful hearts are easily remodeled, no violence is done our societies by usually opening them to those in need of moral cleansing. Occasionally, to be sure, some young life may be so exceedingly depraved as to absolutely demand ostracism; but in the earlier teens cases of the kind are rare. *Nemo repente turpissimus*. Unfortunates of that age may be drifting to the worst of disorders, but as yet, owing simply to insufficient evil experience, they are hardly so confirmed in their vicious habits as to be unfit for membership.

Additional reason for a liberal policy follows from the known strength of juvenile solidarity. Be it for weal or woe, boys so "hang together" that the exclusion of many who are bad means loss of many of the good; and a scriptural passage commends the husbandman who plucked no cockle from his field lest the wheat be rooted up. Take "gang" loyalty into account, then, and have no boy out who can possibly be in.

Furthermore, profane mockery of religious effort has such withering effect, even in juvenile circles, that a few treble-voiced worldings loitering at the corner to pass remarks on "dem pi'us fellers" on the way to your meeting place will effectually minimize attendance. On the other hand, if, by

happy contrast of policy, you begin by securing most of these prospective scoffers the street corners can harbor no unfriendly walking delegates, and nearly all the lads in town become *in spe* a rich spiritual possession.

## SECTION II—ALL THAT'S GOLD DOES NOT GLITTER

I am willing to speak further in favor of the disturbers now before us; our profane, free-fisted, police-baiting youngsters under sixteen. Many of these are really diamonds, though admittedly of rough quality. Hidden under rags, slang, and boyish mischief often lie hearts generous, honest, and pure; souls amazingly responsive to a sacred touch. Indeed the very boisterousness and boldness of the gamin can become less annoying because rightly taken as signs of the worker's opportunity; for these forms of activity are born of a fearless energy, most precious when guided by an awakened Catholic spirit.

In illustration of this, I recall the doings of a certain lad of dissolute parentage and badly-damaged reputation, who first came prominently to my notice by the fact that, intent on enlivening choral features of our service, he brought to sodality meeting and operated therein nothing less than a fish-horn. Later, however, this same member developed into a devout worshiper, and evinced special determination in religious matters by dropping his job because his employer had refused permission for the very exercises in which the convert found, at first, merely an occasion for extemporized instrumental effort.



Happy the friend of souls in dire need who summons together the entire local boy contingent, including lads of low moral standing and victims of irreligious homes! This apostle, reaching the masses in embryo, revives dying faith and hope and inspires Christian charity; he becomes, through his labors, a saving check on the unspeakably deplorable leakage from Catholicity into the channel of unbelief, immorality, and social ruin.

Assuredly, one ambitious of these glorious results can not but rejoice to count scions of criminal royalty among his followers. *Aquila non captat muscas*. For my own part I look back to it as a very consoling disgrace—a sort of glorious scandal—that once during a boys' meeting the sacred chant went all to pieces because our leading warbler was in jail.

### SECTION III—A MOST SACRED ATTRACTION FOR YOUNG "TOUGHS"

My final chapter, offering a plan for assisting street boys to make their first communion, is here anticipated for a special purpose. The coming plan will be unfolded chiefly with the hope of helping lay workers acting under clerical direction; but I would now point out that first communion aid, when it can be given by the priest personally, has the secondary but very important result of moving many a hard, irreligious youngster to warm acceptance of society membership.

In favor of this view, let me point to the oft-overlooked fact, that non-instructed, uncared-for urchins under sixteen—if only of parents claiming

to be Catholics—are in a multitude of instances desirous of performing at least this most sacred religious act; and this even though they be at first ever so strongly disposed to fly from the seeming excess of piety involved in society membership. It is not contended that these young fellows have any burning ambition to approach the altar. On the contrary, their spirit is usually only slightly willing, and the flesh is decidedly weak. Nevertheless, the salutary desire exists, and is strong enough to secure for the unfortunates something otherwise unobtainable—close association with a spiritual leader.

This companionship, brief as it is, can be easily turned to unspeakable gain. The patron who, in ordinary situations, is without the slightest knack of “getting around” young folks will find in the friendly intercourse, open confidence, and awakened piety of a suitably conducted first communion class unique facilities for gaining the affection of his pupils, with consequent influence to lead them whither he will. As a final result, cursing, tobacco-fed, priest-shunning church strangers are readily made over, not only into Mass attendants and monthly communicants, but also into veritable pillars of a boys’ society conducted by the friend who has cleared their way to the Holy Table.

I must insist on the meaning of the last sentence and can not allow myself to be understood as claiming for these lucky mortals mere willingness to make some trial of juvenile organizations. The point is that, enriched with graces largely retrieving the past, they usually become members of the

warmest and most faithful kind; for, after having enrolled many of these spiritual outcasts, I can positively assert that, as regards fidelity to sodality obligations, they have generally proved themselves equal, if not superior to companions whose antecedents were of excellent quality. Assuredly, full ranks will be secured by the worker who with this display of the greatest and holiest of all inducements gives primary attention to the very lads that ordinarily jeer society members, and thus transforms even devouring wolves into bell sheep leading the rest of the flock.

#### SECTION IV—MEMBERSHIP OF BAD BOYS NOT SERIOUSLY DETRIMENTAL TO GOOD ONES

Our fallen state, which makes it impossible for us to accomplish any good without indirect bad results, forbids the assertion, that in a pious society virtuous lads suffer no moral harm whatever by association with those who are corrupt. However, while it is true that in this work, as in every other undertaken for God's glory, the enemy will bring about some evil, it is also true that the injected evil, when light in comparison with concomitant spiritual gains, can be ignored somewhat on the principle of *parvum pro nihilo reputatur*.

This reasoning gives one full liberty to beg place for bad boys in good boys' fraternities, if only it be made entirely clear that the harm done lads of better class is really so little as to make no head against the society's evident and conceded benefits conferred on all. For the purpose, then, of saving the bacon of my young scapegrace friends, I build

on the fact that, in organizations of the general character here contemplated, members are thrown together only for religious exercises and occasional diversions. Now, there is no reason for supposing that, on the former occasions at least, well-disposed lads will come to more harm than by incidentally meeting wayward acquaintances at Mass or Vespers. Moreover, the dangers of a few general recreative assemblies will seem small indeed, if we reflect that juniors do not readily communicate failings by means of mere passing contact, but through real companionship, especially that maintained during idle hours.

And here account must again be taken of the juvenile commonwealth's familylike foundation, the "crowd." This social unit, invariably established on a present or past neighborly basis, combines its few members more or less closely, and to the very considerable, or perhaps total, exclusion of outsiders.

As a result, when there is question of massing youngsters their chumships aid morality by isolating vice in somewhat the same way as police authorities restrict the social evil, by confining it to certain quarters of a town. Though the entire local juvenile contingent be assembled, most boys will have extensive dealings only with fellow habitués of familiar street corners, already accepted for steady companionship, both at home and abroad, and are hardly more likely to be infected with the failings of other parties than when running with them to fires.

So, all in all, no worker need timorously regard the rougher element as an evil leaven that "cor-

rupteth the whole lump." Wayward boys hold their place in a pious society much as patients in a well-kept sanitarium. Owing to the surroundings, their moral diseases are, at least, prevented from attacking associates of sound spiritual health and are sure to receive some kind of check, be it slight, notable, or triumphantly complete.



## CHAPTER XIX

### THE WAITING LIST

#### SECTION I—A STIMULUS TO FAITHFUL MEMBERSHIP

ANY youth wooing the writer's sodality, even though fully qualified by having weathered our twofold test, theological and physical (first communion made and the required stature attained), finds himself still obliged to keep the threshold. He has merely obtained a place on the Waiting List, made up of lads standing to fill vacancies that occur in the regular body.<sup>1</sup> This department, besides rendering other services, is the writer's expedient for continuously admitting members with that independent and impressive circumspection already recommended for the first stages of organization.

The Waiting List, which makes sundry "rough ways plain" for the director, begins its good work by permanently moving all subjects to a higher appreciation of their association. I have already quoted the difficulty commonly put by those who have attracted youngsters into a society only to

<sup>1</sup>My "reserves" must by no means be conceived of as sodality candidates already attending service, and only awaiting the ceremony of "reception" to receive full privileges. Much less are they little fellows too young for the ranks. The supplementary roll is strictly for lads, as yet in no sense members, but merely applicants; lads, however, who are officially declared fully eligible for future vacancies occurring in the main body.

witness the quick fading of its ephemeral glory. "How," they ask, "shall we hold boys?" At every step I am answering: by so adapting our societies to the juvenile mechanism that they can take advantage of innocent early tastes and inclinations, as well as shortsighted youthful notions.

In the present instance, this idea is most advantageously applied by obliging candidates to contemplate the sodality as "chuck full." It is when crowded out of anything, that boys are chiefly impressed with the importance of getting in. Consequently, an organization filled to the extent of requiring locked doors, towers in mysterious but inviting grandeur amidst the clouds of exclusiveness. In virtue of absolute inability to accept anybody at all, it quite outranks things ordinary, *e.g.*, cheap shows, cart-tail sittings, etc., which always humbly make room for the young capitalist or hustler, and actually shares honors with superlatively choice institutions, unattainable by stress of juvenile pocket or muscle, such as the high-priced circus or the high-fenced racetrack.

This state of affairs can not but raise the tone of membership, while happily equipping the director with an abundance of time-saving and disciplinary facilities. Clearly, it is one thing to tramp for hours and hours about town in quest of elusive material *circa quam*, and quite another to contemplate volunteers already lined up at headquarters and eagerly watching for the slightest encouraging signal. It is one task to enforce attendance and due payments on boys who are conscious of having favored the administration by joining and feel that their departure will leave unsightly vacant places,

but an entirely different occupation when your charges recognize admission as a boon and realize that any unoccupied seat is ambitioned by other youngsters standing wistfully at the door.

Meanwhile there is no reason for concealing a fact seeming to show that my ointment has its fly. Some lads, resenting delay, will not present themselves when finally invited to become members.<sup>1</sup> But while this proceeding is to be regretted in certain individuals of known promise, it is on the whole advantageous; for failure to respond usually occurs on the part of ultra "unreliables" who are advisedly subjected to some test as a check on their fruitlessly troublesome comings and goings.

#### SECTION II—A REFUGIUM PECCATORUM

Besides exercising the above desirable influence on ordinarily well-disposed applicants, my half-way house makes a handy stowaway place for "hangers on" of lesser promise. These are individuals suspended for having missed meetings. Behold them now back again, with one eye possibly glancing heavenward and the other certainly cocked on the "flesh pots." Either they are confessedly guilty

<sup>1</sup>While, as a general thing, the Waiting List boys should be called in out of the cold, "first come, first served," just as their names have been received, nevertheless it would be unwise to make this practice a fixed rule. Keep it before the auxiliary force that at least its younger element—little chaps just of the required age (or height)—must expect to find themselves occasionally overlooked in favor of lads who are older and therefore deserving of special consideration. In virtue of this saving clause, the director may betimes ignore the regular order of names and practise considerable spiritual favoritism without fear of revolutionary upset. Very often a boy whose interests seem to demand a hurry-up initiation can be declared "a special case," and then admitted without delay.

of backsliding that may or may not be repeated, or more probably abound in tardy explanations which a well-occupied director can not attempt to investigate and verify.

Now, while prudence demands that such individuals be not reinstated until after undergoing some sort of probation, action that might seem punitive ought to be avoided. What, then, is to be done with prodigals deserving neither "the fatted calf" and "first robes," nor to be driven back to the "far country" of recent exile? Meet the difficulty by utilizing the Waiting List, and thereby granting affectionately disposed oldtimers the freedom and solace of the paternal vestibule until room can be found within.

This arrangement, assuring maintenance of peace and good will, often becomes permanent; for the returned wanderer is always content for the time being with the greeting thus accorded his advances; and if afterward ignored has usually been too much distracted by the rush and bustle of life to retain interest in the readmission he set out to secure. Meanwhile, should any one begin to fret over prolonged exclusion, his wounded feelings will furnish the very best of reasons for an early recall.

Evidently, there is all the difference of frost and sunshine between treating repentant deserters without and with the aid of this exterior lodging place. In the first instance, the organizer can offer only an icy reception. "Owing to your certain, or at least probable fault," he must say, "we can not talk of membership at present. Call again." But under the system just suggested, the kindly patron,

like the gospel sire, goes forth and greets his erring one with the following warm verbal kiss. "It's all right, John; never mind explaining about it, boy; if really in fault, you will do better next time. I am delighted to have you back again; perfectly delighted; only, as you know, we have a pretty long Waiting List, and, of course, you will be entirely satisfied to remain out till your turn for admission comes around."

Here, then, the priest is enabled to preserve with the applicant such relations as are needful, whether the latter is to be received again or not. For, when returning urchins are weak to the extent of being clearly ineligible, it is unwise to break with them wholly. Favorable expectations should be manifested, first, for the sake of the urchins themselves—an unfortunate's advances in the right direction should never be positively discouraged—and, secondly, for the benefit of the work in hand. Youngsters, in no sense with you, are always more or less against you. Far better that rogues unprepared for the society should be its cool friends rather than its enemies; for in the latter capacity, like ocean derelicts threatening seaworthy craft, they will surely prove an especially grave menace to the membership of boys better disposed than themselves.

Consequently, when approached by a lazy, police-recorded, half-unbalanced incorrigible, already tried and found badly wanting, the organizer only makes matters worse by repelling his visitor. Let him rather take down the unworthy applicant's name for the Waiting List and future membership (?). In this matter, we have something to learn



from the politician who, with encouraging seriousness, is ever hopeful of finding places for people without any "pull."

### SECTION III—THE FORMATIVE PROCESS

It remains to unfold ways and means of creating the Waiting List which, save in very large unions, can hardly spring forth as a purely natural growth but must rather be of artificial formation.

As soon as justified by fair attendance, let the organizer declare a necessity of limiting the roll to the length already obtained. The ostensible reason for this step can be, *e.g.*, his personal fear that further increase would prevent the members from enjoying individually the close attention now given; or it may arise from the necessity of restricting the boys to a rather small section of the church so as to leave plenty of room for adults present on occasions. Thus, after admitting perhaps one hundred followers the priest advisedly contrives to call a halt on fresh arrivals, thereby forcing his useful Waiting List into existence.

But now let us take a step backward to see what can be done in the desired direction during the still earlier stages of organization and before the announcement, "no standing room," can be plausibly made. Even then a good substitute for the auxiliary roll is feasible, but to explain the same I must anticipate matter descriptive of seating arrangements. A coming page will advocate as an essential feature that each member be permanently assigned to a certain pew or bench; now, for the purpose of guarding newcomers from confusedly locating

themselves in places other than those appointed, it is always preferable to admit as few as possible on single occasions.

As will at once be seen, this flexible rule, by winding a little impressive red tape about initiations, creates a sort of informal Waiting List in a society the membership of which is not as yet large enough to be actually limited. Thus, having begun with a dozen or more charter members, one wisely accepts at a time not more than half of the candidates presenting themselves, and so each of these finds his progress checked for at least one meeting. Later, a larger society and a lesser number of seat hunters will perhaps justify the plan of taking applicants in still smaller bands, or even singly; and certainly I would not have a lad take part in the meeting immediately following his declaration of good intentions, unless it should happen that he is the only volunteer in sight.

This method of gently impeding admission creates, therefore, an excellent supplementary roll for the society's infancy. Furthermore, after membership has so grown as to justify an actual raising of the bars, the same method renders new service by protecting the regular Waiting List which might otherwise be wiped out of existence. To illustrate:—Let us suppose that some well-developed fraternity can boast of a reserve list carrying say fifteen names, and shows simultaneously an equal number (fifteen) of vacancies; evidently this fraternity, unless restrained in some way, will immediately swallow its satellite bodily.

Fortunately, however, the practice of receiving, at once, as few newcomers as possible will have

prepared the provident director for the emergency. Applying the established policy with whatever degree of strictness may suit the outlook, he accepts at each meeting half or less of the waiting group, thus managing to keep his threatened auxiliary department in existence until re-enforced by new accessions.

#### SECTION IV—LASTLY

While the Waiting List, because of its extrinsic helpfulness, is worth having as early as possible and for any ostensible reason, it becomes, of course, a strict necessity whenever the members may pack the meeting-place or have reached the maximum figure for their director's control over boys supposedly at prayer.

And what growth in numbers will be permitted by the second of these conditions? To this question no exact answer can be given. My championship of commonly-occurring disciplinary ability is not weakened by the admission that priests of such ability may sometimes find their maintenance of order on the wane accordingly as increasing totals of memberships are reached. However, this remark, reasonably understood, does not apply to workers of exceptional governing power nor to those of average governing power who will have taken the pains to strengthen themselves with anti-mischief expedients.

Hence it is impossible to give any figure of membership as the common maximum. On this point, advice must be limited to the suggestion that a roll already respectable by the presence of say two hun-

dred names should be lengthened cautiously; the leader making sure that the gradual increase of bright faces in his gatherings does not prevent him from holding the situation perfectly in hand. For what were gained should the angels contemplate a church full of fun-making, mock devotees and complain with the prophet, "Thou hast multiplied the nation and hast not increased the joy"?

My final word, then, concerning the fundamental matter of regulating admissions, is the expression of an earnest hope that this reserve department be given trial. With such assistance you can build a society fitted for real work by its well-knit, sturdy frame, contrasting most favorably with the overgrown, short-winded, booby-like conglomeration almost sure to result from attractive methods united with unrestricted membership.

This simple stratagem, operating absolutely without cost or annoyance, assures rich results and eases administrative burdens. It enables the organizer to stand as a greater benefactor before the multitude of boys seriously ambitious of joining, and permits him to replace friction with some show of friendship in regard to juvenile weathercocks, renegades, desperadoes, and other such riff-raff. In a word, the director with a Waiting List can piously boast of being almost "all" to nearly everybody—which is, perhaps, about as much as St. Paul himself were able to assert had it been his mission to organize American city boys during this twentieth century.

## CHAPTER XX

### BRIEF PRIVATE VISITS BY THE BOYS TO BE ENCOURAGED

#### SECTION I—ATTRACTING CALLERS

NATURAL attractions, in stirring the members to some enthusiasm for the society and placing them before the public, have not fully accomplished their mission. The bait should be so manipulated as to favor the additional feature of short, frequent, private interviews between the youngsters (calling sometimes singly, sometimes in parties) and their adult friend.

Of course, in bringing about these tete-à-tete interviews, a magnetic worker needs no attractions. Or, rather, he can have plenty of such interviews in virtue of a single and ever-operative attraction, the charm of his own personality. Consequently, the following recommendations are made not for organizers of personal drawing power but in the interests of the ordinarily equipped, willing workers who, as the writer everywhere contends, can easily accomplish all that boy-care demands.

Now leaders devoid of personal winsomeness must draw visitors in a businesslike way and just as the storekeepers draw them, by contriving to have on hand things in which his public is interested. Hence, throughout these pages attractions, as well



as other features of the society, are proposed under forms calculated to bring individual youngsters as often as possible in quest of their patron.<sup>1</sup>

I would begin by encouraging such visits even in friends as yet too young for the society. Possibly nothing that can be devised promotes such early advances better than does the proposed expedient of a physical criterion for membership. During a considerable period before managing to meet this requirement fully, the applicant is consciously under its spell and is likely to be found freely visiting the director for official tests on the slowly yielding fraction of an inch that bars promotion.

On such occasions, a little kindly treatment along the lines about to be described, together with some trifles of gifts bestowed in exceptional cases "to make a boy grow," will both blunt the edge of disappointment and increase good will. So, when finally the candidate can pass for membership, his regard for the director will also be grown, and will have acquired strength foreshadowing fidelity to the obligations assumed.

## SECTION II—THE HOST'S OPPORTUNITIES

After a lad's enrolment, natural attractions will continue, and all the more easily, their good work

<sup>1</sup>Obviously, a club, wherever it is maintained, affords the director constant opportunities for requisite private chats and close acquaintance with his individual followers. But the writer, faithful to his view that the permanent amusement center is non-essential to clerical workers, offers the maintenance of brief private visits as a simpler means whereby the priestly leader can keep the desired familiar footing with his constituents.

of drawing him to your door. The full-fledged member is led to call spontaneously and frequently concerning his share in games, contests, prizes, etc.; and thus coaxed within range can be easily made the object of such effective, quick-firing volleys of kindly interest as will force a surrender of affection to the society and will in other ways disconcert the powers of evil.

In this connection let us note that the patron's higher calling gives religious tone to intercourse otherwise of purely secular character; hence the above happy results are obtainable even if conversations hinge on only commonplace affairs. It is very helpful to a youth's spiritual standing that he meets with priestly concern regarding every-day doings of the family, school, or place of employment. And, then, interest in a single boy, be it shown only on the sidewalk, has this advantage over interest in several lads, shown even from the altar, that the former attentions go directly and fully home to the individual.

### SECTION III—MERCENARY VISITS TURNED TO ACCOUNT

Nor are such visits to be considered valueless, when sometimes made in a purely self-seeking spirit—*i.e.*, for the sole purpose of securing gifts or other favors distributed by the organization. Even when thus inspired, juvenile calls enable the director to form salutary intimacies in which mercenary motives cease to play.

Indeed, the lads to profit most by the present proceeding are half-grown unfortunates more or

less given to the already mentioned un-Catholic and ominous aloofness from the priest. These frightened lambs of the flock, enticed by little favors held in the shepherd's own hand, quickly learn to rout imaginary terrors attributed to the shepherd himself. Such recruits from the spiritual "submerged tenth," having first yielded to the small "gift of the lover," are speedily won over to the great "love of the giver," and to the unspeakably rich reserve gifts that his love implies. And thus they begin, poor boys! even by grasping rungs of baser stuff, to mount the ladder in part of earthly make that leads beyond terrestrial skies.

Accordingly, it is vital to my plan that a youngster, named for any society boon, be never permitted to receive the same by proxy, but be always obliged to secure it through personal recourse to the director. Before realizing the inflexibility of this rule, the lucky chap will sometimes send his little brother or big sister in quest of the coveted windfall. In such cases yield not. Simply smile an affectionate refusal and, wrapped in patience and expectancy, bide your time. The painless hook and invisible line will ultimately bring Master Fish to hand; for, be assured, no boy lets a prize go by default even though to secure the same he must so brave the supernatural as to place himself between its very jaws.

#### SECTION IV—ANOTHER GAIN

The brief interviews here advocated are again of importance because most helpful to the disciplinary management of a juvenile society.

It should always be remembered that, since the director's own personality is pretty much the sum and substance of his fraternity's mechanism, he can lead youngsters collectively just in proportion as he nears them individually. To be sure the leader's disciplinary competency becomes more and more perfect accordingly as he manages to become better acquainted and more in touch with those directing his charges—parents, teachers, and employers—but the sufficient mainstay of his authority will always be an intimate standing with the boys themselves.

Obviously, one who has studiously made friends with juniors has a friend's claim on their conduct. Furthermore, a man who encourages frequent private visits, even if he be of rather weak memory, can easily become master of the features and nomenclature of a flock running into the hundreds; and since ability to enforce order depends largely on one's readiness to single out delinquents nominally, the leader thus equipped enjoys special disciplinary advantage.

Accordingly, acquaintanceship with each and every hopeful is a chief constituent of the simple though seemingly mysterious spell which the expert superior casts, especially during religious exercises, upon his saints assembled. Materialized into "know-all-about-you" glances, this familiarity sweeps the congregational horizon and helps most efficiently to dispel its storm clouds of giddiness as fast as they can form.

Clearly then, by accustoming the members to call on himself, the worker will usually add much to his spiritual influence, fatherly standing, and discipli-

nary control. Indeed, we seem justified in holding that ability to secure and maintain this advantage is a rarely failing mark of general competency and success.

SECTION V—INTERVIEWS, WHEN "SHORT," ARE  
"SWEET"

"But," objects some reader already busied by his numerous irons in more than one fire, "if anybody is going to accept all neighboring youngsters as visitors, he must needs be another Josue with power to halt the sun." Not so. The comings and goings of your boy friends can be systematized in such a way as in nowise to interfere seriously with other affairs.

First of all, these visits should be limited to a fixed hour, presumably of the evening. Bunched in this way they by no means eat up the time that would be consumed by as many separate interruptions scattered throughout the entire day.

But, what is more important, juvenile visits ought to be as I have already described them, short. Brevity in this business not only economizes time but, by often enabling the director to make himself congenial to his visitors, is likely to save the very object of the interviews themselves. For, despite our own years of preparatory youthful training, many of us grown people are likely to prove sorry conversationalists with youngsters, especially with those of the street-boy type.

There is a real difficulty, which, perhaps, com-



paratively few educated persons have ever considered, in getting on when one's habitual confabulatory pyrotechnics must be replaced with the cheap firecrackerlike fizzle of juvenile sidewalk-gossip. To the boy-saver's visitors, science, art, literature, politics, and other subjects of moment to maturity, are mere rubbish; and, on the other hand, very lucky is the boy-saver host if at all *au courant* with the minor sporting events, shows, police doings, accidents, dog fights, and kindred events of contemporaneous street history, in which his guests are deeply interested.

Now, clearly, unless one can make on juvenile callers a favorable, cheery impression, it is almost useless to have them pass his threshold. How, then, can the handicapped director so manage that the requisite impression will be unfailingly made? My best answer is:—by chatting briefly. After all, what can be more prudent in any society-leader short of conversational supplies than to plan conversational occasions of short duration? In the present situation make, of course, a few kindly inquiries, etc., of a personal nature and then, as a sort of interlocutory dessert, serve some small talk; but while introducing the same, you may as well be guiding your callers to the door.

By following the plan here submitted, one may score genuine triumphs at the very edge of disaster. Quite frequently, the adult, who with three minutes of chat entirely congenial to street-boy visitors gracefully dismisses the latter, would suffer conversational collapse had he to entertain these human curios three minutes more.

SECTION VI—A FEW SECONDS FOR EACH CALLER;  
ONLY A DAILY QUARTER OF AN HOUR FOR ALL

Neither would I prolong interviews for even the purpose of giving good advice. Your visitor's standing with regard to the society's communions, religious meetings, and the like may well demand a few sentences; or some special circumstance, *e.g.*, a death in his family, will occasion a little new spiritual attention; nevertheless, let all soul-aiding alms be of small bulk.

Boy clients are never frightened away by the few words that suffice as food for future thought, but, if much evangelized, they become a vanishing quantity. And after all it matters less that a lad has given his time only briefly to a friendly spiritual guide provided the lad becomes thereby conscious of having really gained one.

In the writer's opinion, then, a few moments will answer for each visitor and, as stated above, the total spent on all comers should not exceed a daily quarter of an hour. And bless our dear young friends! How well they lend themselves to this businesslike dispatch. Feebly influenced, as yet, by ideas on personal dignity, they are very far from wincing under the various little offhand signs and ceremonies, conventional and original, whereby loitering guests are made to understand that their prompt departure will be appreciated.

Indeed, boy callers, with their mania for incessant locomotion, are the funniest callers to be found. Never are they so given to social rubrics as to be anything else than openly all ears to the host, for his slightest notice to quit.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE PLEDGE

#### SECTION I—THE BOYS' TOTAL ABSTINENCE MOVEMENT AS COMMONLY CONDUCTED

WE HERE begin to study forms of spiritual endeavor that stand as the real objects of juvenile organization.

In connection with one of these undertakings, aggressive action against the drink evil, I submit that the instructions on intemperance sure to be delivered before our young friends will hardly be worthy of the opportunity offered unless the instructions appeal to at least such of the hearers as have seen drunkenness at home, asking the latter to bind themselves until twenty-one against all intoxicants. This safety step, the actual taking of which can occur in the sacred privacy of the confessional, is most reasonably and hopefully urged on the class mentioned, many of whom will prove already more than half disposed for hostilities with the habit known to them as a domestic destroyer of bodies and souls.

A far wider movement against over-indulgence in drink is that of leading all of the members to openly pledge themselves as above. This policy is likely to commend itself especially in localities that intemperance has afflicted to the extent of creating something of a reaction in the boys themselves; and, in parents, a warm readiness to co-

operate with any strong action toward saving their sons. But, on the other hand, where there is comparative freedom from the drink evil and in consequence lesser public feeling against it, the same total abstinence program would seem easily able to injure the popularity of the union and shorten its roll.

It is to be observed, furthermore, that priests who labor to secure the foregoing promise from the entire body of clients do so in accordance with one or the other of the following methods. Either they explain beforehand that the pledge does not oblige under pain of sin—in which case it can hardly restrain youth effectively—or else, as usually happens, they remain wholly silent on the subject, leaving each one of the crusaders to bind himself in whatever degree may accord with the crusader's understanding of things and his good will.

## SECTION II—OBJECTIONS STATED AND ANSWERED

The latter proceeding on the part of directors is condemned by many who believe that numbers of the boys so marshaled will in their hearts pledge themselves *sub gravi*, but only to break the promise steadily, and of course sinfully, until of age. Furthermore, as it is asserted, these faithless unfortunates are very often unwilling to even elicit a resolution of complying with what they still regard as a strict obligation, and this sad indisposition can not but bar them for the time being from the sacraments. And finally the view is expressed that frequently pledge-takers learn to make their promise a substitute for the divinely appointed sources

of spiritual strength—confession and holy communion. These three considerations lead to the position that the total abstinence promise, obtained from young people left to form their own consciences as to the gravity of its obligation, creates evil quite in excess of any good the promise may achieve.

The writer would, however, point out to the propounders of these difficulties a very important feature of the situation that seems somewhat overlooked. It is that, when permitted to decide for themselves, all junior pledgers, the same as most senior endeavorers in the same line, are of the view that their total abstinence "vow," when once broken, is thereby wholly sapped of binding vigor.

The statement now made is amply confirmed in the experience of confessors; also by the fact that deserters from the "water wagon" who seek rehabilitation never find requisite strength in a renewal of their violated engagement but wish to be secured with a brand-new chain. And when boys in particular are concerned, it will be seen that the sacred ban on intoxicants is readily dissolved into nothingness by a few drops of strong drink taken in utter forgetfulness of the contrary resolve, or even by the merest mistake.

We find, then, a vast difference between the pledge as it falls from youthful lips and the same pledge as really accepted by youthful minds and hearts. While the promise is worded to express, like the vow of chastity, permanent restraint, it is understood, in common with the vow of virginity, as ceasing to hold after the first violation. Indeed, the priest might just as well bind his followers ex-



plicity in the sense of this latter and easier-going view were it not that by so doing he would seem at the outset to be making ready for pledge-breakers and would thereby have the very discouraging appearance of expecting them on his hands by the wholesale.

Neither should it be held that the erring boy's favorable initial *post lapsum* state of conscience will be unfavorably altered later on. Assuredly the backslider's understanding of his case must remain *in statu quo* until he enters a confessional; and there, as is to be expected, he will receive direction warily guarded against increasing the occasions of sin.

Should the penitent find his accusation heard without comment, he will thereby be confirmed in the view already taken as to the inefficacy of the broken pledge; should he be successfully exhorted to make a new promise it will hardly be held "that the last state of that man is worse than the first." No doubt there is some reason for concern if confessors, oblivious of the promise-maker's cloudy conception of things at the moment of the self-restraining pronouncement, insist that the pledge, regardless of violations, retains binding force until the expiration of the appointed time; but even then we may hope that the doctrine of an indefectible obligation is unfolded before only such souls as give assurance of respecting the same.

Now these circumstances, by immensely reducing the amount of indirectly resulting evil, contribute proportionately to the credit of the boys' pledge as commonly given. The spiritual damage attaching to unfaithfulness falls usually to a single offence,

instead of constituting four, six, or eight years of sin, plus probably prolonged absence from the sacraments. Supposing, then, that even ninety-nine have renounced the precious engagement, has this one act of undoing inflicted on all their ninety-nine souls such injury as the faithful one-hundredth alone, unless preserved by the common movement, would have suffered in his soul from a life-long drunkard's career?

### SECTION III—ORGANIZATION A POWERFUL SUPPORT TO FAITHFUL OBSERVANCE

And while pitying unfortunate pledge-breakers, have the sympathetic critics numbered the happy pledge-keepers formed by thoroughgoing juvenile total abstinence associations really able to attract boys and to hold them in a state of glad captivity?

A society of the kind works by removing temptation; everybody being under promise, no one is left to raise the laugh on fidelity. Then, each meeting of the fraternity is of itself both a reminder and a support for the holy obligation assumed. Furthermore, the spiritual guide is constantly in touch with those concerned to rout all discouragement from drink taken accidentally or through forgetfulness or in sickness, and to strengthen souls that waver.

The great service of sustaining falterers he will accomplish partly through exhortation, but chiefly by bringing about a more or less general recourse to sacramental aid. And this endeavor, let us note, permits the spiritual guide to silence a forward objection. For, while calling to confession and holy communion, he enjoys every facility for explaining

things, and so effectually dispels any possible notion on the part of his young followers that the total abstinence promise and the sacraments are to be spoken of in the same breath.

It seems no rash assertion that a body of pledge-takers kept, until about at the end of their teens, under the salutary influence of a live organization can always be trusted to make an excellent after-showing. Certainly the author is free to declare that his own years of attention to total abstinence witnessed results warranting strong assurance of fidelity in a large percentage of the boys, and grounding moral certainty that at least more than half of the number persevered until the assigned birthday was reached. The same favorable testimony we may believe can be given by all other directors who have dealt with the matter under the same circumstances.

#### SECTION IV—A "HOME-MADE" DIPLOMA

It is submitted in conclusion that the pronouncement of the promise—often coalescing happily with formal reception into the society—should be made as impressive as possible by the accompaniment of considerable ceremony together with all of the publicity obtainable. The event is at its best when those chiefly concerned find it filling the church to the doors with their friends, and placing themselves by name in the next day's papers, "a spectacle to the world and to angels and to men."

Naturally a commemorative document of some kind will be given to the heroes of the occasion. In providing this keepsake will it not be well to pass

by the prints published for universal use and prepare instead a neat diploma of your own? The latter, identified with the recipients by naming their town and church while displaying an enlargement of their society emblem, will surely inspire special appreciation.

The appendix exhibits a diploma of the kind with hope that it may afford general guidance or at least some suggestion. The document is so offered all the more confidently for the reason that it has been found worthy of hanging in framed glory on the walls of many homes.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE RELIGIOUS MEETING:—PREPARING FOR IT

#### SECTION I—SIMPLE, WELL-MEANT ATTENDANCE AN UPLIFT

IN ORDER to hold rallies to the best advantage we must first carefully weigh each item of their contribution to the great object of organization: the cultivation of a Catholic spirit, especially in the matter of recourse to the sacraments.

Here even a passing glance bespeaks the advantage obtainable through instructions if well followed and through prayers if devoutly recited; but in my opinion this hoped-for blessing of the meeting should not be allowed to overshadow a remaining and ever assured outcome. An advance page has called attention to the benefit the society's director confers on his followers by simply placing them, through routine personal intercourse, on a footing of respectful familiarity with himself; let me now claim that the society's gathering, through nothing more than its routine material operation, confers the similar, but far greater favor of bringing young folks nearer to their religion and to the sacramental presence of Jesus Christ.

It is easy to see how interest in the union's pious assembly—even the qualified interest that does not command close attention, but only a respectful,



sympathetic attitude—can guide participants in the directions named. The first good work (attendance) moves to the other good works (closer approach to religion and the sacraments) in virtue of kinship with them, much as any one, after making friends, easily places the latter on terms of familiarity with his own immediate relatives.

Acting, then, by suggestion the sodality's product of optional church attendance at once facilitates prescribed church attendance for Sunday Mass and is equally influential in commending its twin sodality feature, the monthly communion. In addition, the same optional church attendance aids perseverance in the good path chosen; this it accomplishes by more or less disposing one for the rest of his days in favor of non-obligatory gatherings before the altar and connection with pious societies. Obviously, whenever the religious exercises of a meeting may achieve the success explicitly aimed at, results are increased; but I, for one, am far from condemning a session because marked by my failure to say anything really moving for the boys or by their failure to say anything that will surely move the Lord.

To repeat: the gain for souls set forth above as the paramountly important spiritual object of organization seems far from being exclusively dependent on our uncertain success in having exhortations thoroughly heeded or knee bendings devoutly made. On the contrary that gain (in substance, even though in lesser degree) is sure to follow from utterly absent-minded but respectful participation in the religious assemblies, for such participation is itself an influence moving careless lads to

fidelity and faithful lads toward the inner circle of Catholic life.

SECTION II—HOW OFTEN SHOULD MEETINGS BE  
HELD?

Naturally the settlement of this point hinges on the view advanced in the last section. If it were true that the sole, or at least the conspicuously chief, result of rallies lies in the direct, ordinarily sought fruit of instructions and devotions, then the utmost multiplication of the rally would become of leading importance, and workers would be unavoidably sensitive to any cutting down of that feature for the purpose of ratifying the weak-kneed membership of numerous followers.

To illustrate the line of action sure to be followed under this hypothesis, let us suppose that a society three hundred strong has two hundred trusty supporters, the rest being unreliable. The spiritual guide, we will assume, foresees that his faithful two hundred will do credit to as many as forty meetings a year, while the one hundred remaining boys if subjected to that pace are sure to drop off. At the same time it is clear that the less willing minority can be induced to stand firmly by the shorter program of, let us say, fifteen annual gatherings. Under these circumstances what will the priest do? For the sake of the unfortunate prospective truants he thinks of reducing the proposed forty meetings to fifteen; but is at once staggered by the reflection that the change will melt his previously figured total of eight thousand annual attendances

(40x200) down to an unsatisfactory four thousand five hundred (15x300).

Now believing, as we have just supposed, that aside from the direct outcome of exhortations and prayers the assemblies yield nothing worth having, the worker can not let eight thousand spiritual impressions be replaced by half of that number. He consequently feels obliged to sacrifice the one hundred spiritual weaklings altogether, in order to confer a desirably filled measure of benefit on at least his better disposed two hundred.

### SECTION III—JUVENILE MEGALOMANIA TURNED TO ACCOUNT

Meanwhile, a very different settlement of the presented case will be made by those who join with the writer in finding that the religious meeting can perform its work, as it were, *per accidens*; i.e., by suggesting lifelong Catholic conduct to youngsters on hand with a sufficiently thoughtful, hearty amen for exercises the directly intended fruits of which the youngsters have really missed. Persons holding this view will feel that, even with meetings largely sacrificed in favor of the less responsive class, the society can still accomplish its work on the members.

For here the situation is saved by the marvelous boyish enlargement of introspective vision that enables the possessor to find himself accomplishing wonders whenever astir at all. Let Danny undertake domestic commissions, class lessons, employment jobs, or whatever else you like, and on very scant effort he feels that the measure of required

endeavor has been grandly filled to the full. To be sure the task-mistresses at home and at school, as also the paymaster elsewhere, gradually manage to undeceive Danny regarding the supposed splendor of his achievements in their respective departments; but disillusion in certain matters subject to scrutiny for results is very slow in relieving our lad from a false impression of satisfactory personal outlay in fields of activity where no such scrutiny occurs.

Now, with the latter departments of exertion we must include the society in which the burden of meetings is light. Indeed such a fraternity positively humors the youthful way of seeing things by gravely accepting a rather trifling amount of attendance as if ideally extensive. Accordingly, youthful megalomania, though ever utterly powerless to multiply the direct fruits of instruction or prayer, is here at its very best in magnifying our hero's credit for a few good deeds done. Hence, Danny, having been coaxed to take part in as little as fifteen annual pious affairs, proceeds to line himself up with the pillars of the Faith just the same as if his weathered pious church occasions were three times as many; and straightway finds courage to act in religious matters—Sunday Mass, reception of the sacraments, etc.—more or less as he sees the other pillars do.

So we find here a condition of things that amply justifies the policy of keeping the rallies at whatever modest figure may be entirely practicable in connection with the more careless element of the fraternity. How many, then, shall they be annually? Naturally varying circumstances of place

and time prevent the norm just given from returning uniform answers to this question. The author may, however, venture to interpret the rule for his own and like localities; to him it seems that meetings for New York City juveniles of the present day should keep closely to the lowest number presented in this chapter; *i.e.*, they should not be more than fifteen or twenty a year.

#### SECTION IV—"COMPEL THEM TO COME IN, THAT MY HOUSE MAY BE FILLED"

An arrangement (adopted, as we shall now suppose) by which rallies are permitted to be of other than continuous weekly occurrence involves the disadvantage of freeing our dear dodgers from the spell of a regular hebdomidal call to duty, without which they are liable to forget the obligation assumed. Perverse juvenile nature, having been too slow spiritually for gatherings held in unbroken seventh-day sequence, remains too slow mentally for gatherings not so held and thereby adds to the embarrassment of directors desirous of making things easy for their charges.

This situation can hardly be met satisfactorily in any other way than that of serving on the members, at least occasionally, printed announcements of forthcoming meetings. Other expedients adopted for the purpose seem doomed *a priori* to failure. Very commonly it is judged that the assembly becomes sufficiently self-assertive by clinging to certain unchanging dates, as the first Monday of the month or the first and third Monday, etc. No doubt the boys will retain a rule of the kind well



enough, but their advertence to the rule is to be counted on for all Mondays save the right one.

In some instances further awakening effect is sought by connecting amusements immediately with the religious doings; however, not to mention other objections, it seems hardly feasible to furnish steadily on such occasions entertainments of a quality to cope with the heavy-weight heedlessness here considered. Neither will the desired result be secured by reminders from the altar. As we all know, these are of very uncertain penetration for adult ears, not to speak of smaller ones.

#### SECTION V—MEETINGS TACTFULLY ADJUSTED

Whoever may yield to the considerations here advanced and submit to the necessity of sending out circulars will, I believe, consult both economy and success by rejecting the plan of holding assemblies at fixed regular intervals (monthly or bi-monthly) throughout the year. Let him rather establish groups of consecutive weekly gatherings, these groups being parted by vacations made long or short according to circumstances.

Under this way of doing the meetings, whenever they may be, occur with the kind of sequence that jogs the memory, and consequently they demand lesser support from notices. In fact, by the proposed arrangement, circulars are no longer required in advance of each gathering, but have merely the mission of heralding the opening of any series of gatherings, and go forth only at the close of every period of rest.

But then such periods need not be many. Ral-

lies having been inaugurated some time in September will perhaps be broken by a fall vacation, but at all events they ought to number eight or twelve before yielding to the Christmas intermission; the latter can begin in early December, and might as well be generously prolonged to cover at least the initial enthusiasm of the skating season. Toward the end of January or later, the director resumes with perhaps seven or eight occasions still in sight. These he distributes before and after an Easter breathing spell, the latter being lengthened or shortened to suit.

The last of the sessions occurs advisedly early enough in May to anticipate the warm weather, and is followed by the customary summer closing. With the number of interruptions limited in this way, printed calls to ensuing groups of meetings need to appear scarcely oftener than four times a year.

#### SECTION VI—BOYISH TASTE SUITED

In conclusion it seems just to make a new point for gatherings in groups interspersed irregularly with vacations as compared with an equal number of gatherings held at fixed intervals throughout the year. I would show that the former method is the one better adapted to juvenile nature, and consequently the more attractively helpful of the two.

Let assemblies be held, we will suppose, bi-monthly without any break and, even while separately slipping a boy's memory, they collectively loom up before him with oppressive ultra-business-like solemnity. On the other hand, periods formally dedicated to repose introduced here and

there among the assemblies brighten the situation immensely. "Vacation," best appreciated by scholars still unripe and toilers not yet horny-handed, lends a charm of its own to everything undertaken by the young.

The two systems are easily contrasted in the descriptions they receive from those concerned when acting as self-appointed recruiting sergeants for their respective societies. Chaps invited to join naturally inquire, "how often do you have to meet?" and are informed as follows. The apostle from the organization of machine-like, monotonous operation inevitably transmits, in an uninviting reply, his own indelible impression of the organization's burden. "Outside of hot weather," he answers, "we meet twice a month; that means twenty times a year."

Meanwhile, the enroller from a union exacting the same twenty meetings, but under a more insinuating arrangement, is enamored with his society's system of "rest cure" to the extent of quite overlooking reverse features. Accordingly his statement—which the writer's own boys readily make—is much more encouraging than the one just quoted. "We hardly have any meetings at all," declares this fascinated agent; "our sodality is a cinch; it's forever on vacation."

#### SECTION VII—AT WHAT HOUR?

I have raised this question for the purpose of entering a friendly protest against the practice of holding the sessions during daylight on Sundays.

Often, no doubt, this method is adopted with the

idea that the members can be collected more easily on a day which of itself brings them churchward; but experience shows, on the contrary, that the rollicking young people under consideration are quite averse to all Sunday spiritual outlay beyond attendance at Mass, and that their sensitiveness in this particular must conflict sadly with the popularity of societies making the foregoing distasteful demand.

And prospects are not helped, but rather are utterly ruined, by linking the boys' meeting with Sunday affairs for the little ones—the children's Mass or the Sunday-school. Such arrangements prove fatal by ruling the entire contingent of older and more desirable lads hopelessly out of the count.

But the more usual motive for holding the sodality meetings by day seems to be an unwillingness to accept the alternative of bringing the members out of their homes by dark. Elsewhere the writer has dealt with what would seem an exaggerated estimate of the dangers attaching to young folk's evening outings, and can only hope that his views will at least exonerate organizations calling boys from the parental roof on a fixed weekly night some fifteen or twenty times a year to spend a short hour in a place as little dangerous as the Church.

#### SECTION VIII—WHERE?

A splendid opportunity seems to be missed by excluding juvenile religious meetings from the church proper and relegating them to the church basement or school hall.

Experience supports faith in giving assurance

that Christians in general worship far more fruitfully before God's altar than in any lesser place. This truth is so fully recognized as regards grown people that the spectacle of a devotional society of adults meeting elsewhere than before the tabernacle is a rarity; but what is here found helpful to men and women should be judged helpful *a fortiori* to their juniors; the latter more than the former need the stimulus which devotion gains from being exercised within sacred precincts.

And the view just presented gathers force when it is considered that our labors are often directed to the sons of careless parents. Clearly these neglected, thoughtless young fellows are all the more likely to become attached to their spiritual mother if unreservedly welcomed within her material temples. Accordingly when such lads begin to make salutary approaches homeward, it is indeed sad that, for the very exercises through which this change of heart is to be perfected, they should be led into some secondary parochial assembly place.

More encouraging treatment will make, as we may very reasonably hope, a lasting impression even on such of this class as can not be immediately reformed. It is an undeniable advantage to any man estranged from the practice of religion and breathing an irreligious social atmosphere to recall that during boyhood he was entirely at home in the very house of God—not merely an accepted visitor to its annex, or, for Sunday Mass, to its vestibule, but at home in the church itself—and in one of its pews, near the altar, which he was cordially expected to help fill.



## SECTION IX—GROUNDLESS FEARS

Nor are weighty reasons given for the practice here opposed. Some directors urge that, on certain important matters, they can speak more plainly and pointedly to the boys when the latter are strictly by themselves; but assuredly all that need be said in common to these sinners can be appropriately delivered in the presence of auditors of the opposite sex; and, for that matter, anything ill adapted to a mixed congregation may better be withheld from the juvenile gathering and reserved for confessional explanations to such individuals as are especially concerned.

More frequently our young friends are excluded from the church through apprehension that they would not behave themselves there in a befitting manner. But this fear must yield to the consideration that a person able to hold juveniles to the degree of seriousness requisite for a religious meeting in any ordinary place will certainly be able to hold them before the altar to the greater seriousness there demanded. For the sanctuary offers its own great contribution of restraint on Catholic youth. To be sure this special sacred influence is not constantly felt by all of the worshipers; nevertheless it is at every moment effective on at least many of their number and, through these, indirectly exercises very considerable control over the rest.

And, finally, meetings held in the church are much helped to good order by *ipso facto* bringing in adults who would not follow the youngsters elsewhere and whose attendance, as I have just endeavored to show, is in no wise embarrassing from

another point of view. The presence of even a few men and women has marked effect on juniors. Indeed, the writer derives such valuable sobering assistance from this source that he can hardly consent to hold a meeting when for some special reason no grown people will attend; and, on the other hand, he is never so fully at ease with his hundreds of sodalists as when they are surrounded by their elders in numbers large enough to create a difficulty in maintaining for the boys the pews allotted to their use.

Whenever the society may be assembled before the altar, the sanctuary itself needs to be rescued from cheerless vacancy. Happily, however, the sacred place is easily filled with individuals who have already won our sympathy—the little fellows almost but not quite eligible for the association proper. Located as described and in whatever numbers may be permitted by the space within the communion rail, these “clerics” are quite content with their seeming near approach to the goal of membership. Meanwhile, besides providing an ecclesiastical looking foreground, they can be made very helpful to the singing, as the section on musical features will explain.

All things considered, then, the holiest of earthly places seems the one in which the junior sodality should find its religious home. And, anyway, let me state for the sake of clearness that in my remaining pages religious meetings will always be regarded as occurring before the sanctuary light.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE RELIGIOUS MEETING:—LOCATING BOTH THE BOYS AND THEIR DIRECTOR

#### SECTION I—A MEASURE OF FIRST IMPORTANCE : —EACH MEMBER TO TAKE AN ASSIGNED PLACE

THE expedient by far the most favorable to the maintenance of good order is a strictly enforced regulation requiring everybody to occupy a designated, fixed pew; the number of which he, from the beginning of membership, keeps carefully in mind.<sup>1</sup>

First of all, fixed seats prevent mischief by check-mating the impulse that juveniles follow when settling down anywhere, of forming, on the basis of personal friendship, overcrowded and playfully disorderly groups. Chums, of course, can never be entirely happy unless all of their crowd are gathered in a single bunch, and while this display of attachment is unobjectionable on other occasions, the same will have to be actively antagonized during spiritual exercises if anything is to be done. Couples or trios of youthful bosom friends must be considered quite outside of the scope of the divine assurance "where there are two or three gathered together in my name," etc.; for such chaps having mischief-making as a permanent joint occupation

<sup>1</sup>As will be shown later this measure is, besides, well-nigh indispensable in large organizations for the accurate marking of attendance.

elsewhere, find it difficult to contain themselves while side by side in church.

Happily, however, the system of fixed pews checks over-active combinations most effectively. Nor is it usually necessary to this result that, in allotting places, the director should make it a special point to scatter new arrivals known to be in offensive and defensive alliance. As a rule, parties will be sufficiently separated by the simple routine of taking vacant seats just as the latter occur.

Again, permanently assigned pews give new aid to discipline by facilitating the work of active surveillance. Under favor of the system, the director, easily acquiring and retaining a good idea of the whereabouts of each and every member, is able to supply the latter with tranquillizing assurance that any notable display of levity will be surely and speedily treated at its very source. In this connection the author has already urged as most important that the organizer should endeavor to know every follower by name. It speaks poorly for one's control and is a decided encouragement to "cutting up" if, when the proprieties of the sacred place are disregarded, he must reach the offender by a round-about description of the latter's personality or location; on the other hand, there is masterful snap and power in the short, directly aimed warning, "John Smith, behave yourself."

The method here recommended seems far preferable to the plan of forming the members merely into sections, those of each section having the freedom of a designated lot of seats. The latter arrangement does not wholly prevent undue crowding into any one pew, nor does it in the least restrain

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chums who happen to be of the same section from banding together with disastrous effect. And, finally, freedom enjoyed by the boys to occupy any of several benches leaves the director with a much less perfect idea where any of his friends who may need special attention are to be found.

### SECTION II—STRICT FIDELITY TO THIS RULE EASILY OBTAINED

It is, indeed, most encouraging that the requirement of fixed pews, which in the writer's opinion is basic to all management of juvenile meetings, is one that can be rigidly enforced without the slightest difficulty.

A first step in the desired direction consists in seeing that newcomers reach their appointed locations without mistake. Hence it is well to receive candidates in parties, each squad being summoned to present itself on an evening prior to that of the first meeting to be attended. By this process fresh arrivals, besides being toned up for membership by a little instruction on its duties, can be officially guided in advance to their respective places which afterward they will hardly be able to miss.

Afterward attention to the assigned seat can be secured by a rule that any lad sitting elsewhere than in his appointed place shall be considered and marked absent from the meeting, the penalty of suspension for absence meanwhile hovering in sight. The effect of this expedient will be strengthened if, for the purpose of jogging the memory, each one's pew number be kept before him and exacted of him



on every possible occasion. It should appear on communications sent to the members; on season tickets for entertainments, etc. And, finally, each lad can be required to write his pew number whenever, *e.g.*, he mails to the director or signs a communion card.

These simple arrangements will always be found triumphantly successful in leading boys to both remember and occupy their intended sittings. Indeed, the writer can certify that in his own sodality the offense of getting the wrong place is almost unknown. Even after a long four months' suspension of meetings, every member marches into the church and takes his appointed bench with as much precision as if it had served him the evening before.

### SECTION III—FURTHER PRECAUTIONS

But the leader, having located his boys in a way unfavorable to disorder, can still consult the same good cause by advisedly locating himself.

Save during the delivery of formal instructions, his *point d'avantage* is never within the sanctuary but always out in the middle aisle and therefore between the rows of pews. While making informal remarks the speaker will naturally remain near the altar and more or less stationary. But it may be suggested that when not addressing the meeting, *i.e.*, during the moments occupied by hymns and prayers, he does well to keep in slow movement up and down the aisle so as to keep himself in the midst of his followers as thoroughly as possible. Boys think twice before misbehaving under a superior whose affectionate ambition is seemingly to

be as close to each of his dearly beloved as he possibly can.

And, furthermore, the spiritual ruler easily places some extension of his authority at everybody's elbow by installing in each pew an officer responsible for the conduct of his fellow-tenants. To be sure these functionaries, as holding sway over a mere half dozen of inferiors, do not acquire any keen sense of power, and consequently hardly make much exertion in favor of discipline; nevertheless, they will occasionally show themselves actively faithful to their trust,<sup>1</sup> and at any rate are more or less pledged to good conduct on their own part; it is certainly no small advantage that about one-sixth of the members are thus permanently inclined to the side of law and order.

Besides, the minor magnate who reigns over a pew, even though he actually does little for discipline, will often have the appearance at least of being about to do much; and, with this appearance confirming the director's seeming reliance, a great many of the lads can be zealously "bluffed" into a conviction that any mischief they may inaugurate is doomed to instantly suffer a near-by rebuke.

And never fear that the position just described may prove too insignificant to create would-be holders. In the first place its incumbents are enthroned at the entrance of their respective pews—in the writer's sodality they are for this reason called "end boys"—and, though neither anatomy, psychology, nor sociology can explain the reason why, that particular location, as constant church-experi-

<sup>1</sup>As will be explained further on, these lesser officers can become most helpful toward the correct marking of attendance.

ence shows, is irresistibly attractive to even grown men; be assured it is equally enticing to worshipers in their teens. And secondly, as to the honor of the thing; American juvenile nature, being incipiently office-holding nature, invariably does far better with a small lift than when not lifted at all; it instinctively rates any slight command over others as a sure stepping-stone toward higher dignities to come.

This sentiment is especially strong in the older lads of our organizations who are really in need of some show of authority as an "evener up" for the loss of personal dignity entailed by perseverance with junior members. In consequence the leader, if awake to the situation, will welcome the plan of "pew-officers" by which many if not all of his more influential constituents can be somewhat satisfactorily "placed."

#### SECTION IV—GUARD THE EXIT

But before proceeding further the writer would offer a word on the importance of providing for the close of the meeting, so that it may end in a dignified way.

Naturally, when all is over the cheerfulness we have been trying to sustain suddenly acquires undesirable intensity and moves the boys to make a pell-mell rush for the sidewalk. But this unbecoming departure can be headed off by accustoming the members to leave the church, under the direction of their own officers, in the order of their seats. When the outgoing is so directed I would not have the vacating of pews begin near the altar and extend to-

ward the end of the church. Under that arrangement the files of lads marching out are always enough between the director and the boys still keeping their seats to partly screen the latter from the former's view. A better plan is to form the line of departure from the rear pews, thus leaving all of the members, as long as they are stationary, under the unobstructed observation of their spiritual father's kindly eye.

To be sure, no matter what measures be taken, we may expect our young friends to ever be nearly as expeditious in getting out as they were in getting in. Still it is feasible and important to have them retire with some faint appearance of half regretful deliberation, rather than as if making their escape from imprisonment for life.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE RELIGIOUS MEETING:—MAKE IT CHEERFUL

#### SECTION I—THE EARLY BIRD SHOULD GET ITS WORM

THE author claims no special display of wisdom in declaring that the first essential for the success of boys' religious gatherings is that they be given an engaging and enlivening tone.

It goes without saying that youngsters find little difficulty in attending pious assemblies of sunny character and that spiritual truths and maxims heard therein obtain, all the more easily, an abiding place in their minds and hearts. Accordingly, these pages will be found but true to their scope when they offer certain suggestions through which our church exercises may acquire the mild charm just named.

Often enough improvement in this respect can be made even before the meeting opens. The occasion exists wherever the members who arrive in advance of the appointed moment have been required to remain waiting in the scene of the coming pious exercises or in some kindred place where offhand amusement is out of the question and silence or at least "half silence" must be observed. Obviously, the boys will find this a rather dreary way of beginning the evening.

The mistake, moreover, actively fosters the great



annoyance of late-coming by which those in fault miss part of the session, besides disturbing it. Youngsters deterred by the prospect of a funereal reception aim at presenting themselves "just in time"; but their endeavor, while sufficient in theory, forever creates tardy arrivals in practice.

Accordingly, the threshold of the assembly will brighten up so attractively as to reduce delayed attendance to a comparatively low minimum if lads be given any rendezvous whatever where they can be wholly "free and easy" until the exercises begin. Should a gymnasium or any other especially congenial center be available, so much the better; but in point of fact no other place than the street in the church vicinity is necessary, and as for the writer, no other has ever been at his command.

It can hardly matter that this provision for arriving members obliges them to offend, for some moments, against the city ordinance in favor of unobstructed thoroughfares; their temporary occupation of the street in nowise conflicts with the spirit of municipal legislation, and hence will hardly be noticed by the authorities. On the contrary, here, as in other matters, organizers can always count on the hearty support of the police, who, suffering from juvenile misbehavior more than any other class of men, are correspondingly appreciative of undertakings whereby the juvenile public will be kept under some moral restraint.

## SECTION II—AT THE CHURCH DOOR

And, while the director will naturally remain with his boys gathered beside the house of God, he

will probably find it helpful to have also a guardian of the peace on hand. The presence of the latter will prove in its own way efficient toward keeping the sidewalk clear for pedestrians, and in discouraging doings unsuited to the surroundings—among which doings snowballing deserves to be emphatically mentioned.

It must be acknowledged that the street-crowd which, by this plan, awaits the opening of doors is anything but devout in either its appearance or activities; indeed, one needs no little faith in the well-concealed religiosity of boy nature to believe that this shouting, whistling, jostling aggregation of runners and sliders, pushers and wrestlers will soon be metamorphosed into something of a quiet, prayerful assembly. But at the appointed signal the rompers begin to show a more serious side by quitting their sports for an encouraging movement toward the church. It is the custom of the writer to guide this approach by having the bell rung twice. Its first strokes, heard three minutes before the opening of the meeting, warn loiterers who are still at some little distance that they must immediately repair near-by; at the second summons all are expected to enter.

The policeman, if on hand, can now render valuable assistance by extending and perfecting the movement on the church doors. This the officer accomplishes by becoming suddenly mindful of the city regulation against obstructing the streets—a measure wisely adopted, of course, for the convenience of the public and especially deserving of enforcement after having been accidentally suspended for a time. While actual and extensive

union of Church and State seems undesirable—perfect in theory but fatal in practice—how delightful to find Mother Church leaning occasionally on the *brachium seculare* just a little!

Hence the consolation experienced by the author when one evening the attending officer, who happened to be new on the force and not fully conversant with its duties, showed for the cause of religion an amount of zeal that was edifying even while quite in excess of his legal authority. Not only did this representative of the State hurry everybody into the church, but he insisted that there they should remain. A few victims—lads not at all connected with the sodality—who had been gathered in with the crowd, tried to withdraw, but in vain. The policeman, standing club in hand and menacing even every furtive glance toward the door, obliged all hands to stay until the service was done.

### SECTION III—MISCHIEF TO BE NOT MERELY SUPPRESSED, BUT FORESTALLED

Undoubtedly the most important endeavor toward promoting cheerfulness in the meeting now begun is that of preventing the least invasion of objectionable behavior.

All disciplinarians of course devote themselves to this undertaking, but often they do so as a matter of convenience to themselves; while here the same course is essential to the success of the work undertaken. For, in the present instance, it will not suffice that misconduct—supposing the same to have gathered any considerable head—be merely suppressed. To struggle, no matter how successfully,

with notable, developed disorder means to attack the promoters of disorder with corrections, scoldings, and punishments which can not but surround our proceedings with disastrous gloom.

However, at the very beginning of the evening one is pretty sure of finding a considerable amount of bustle and buzz, suggestive of disorder, unavoidably on his hands. The arrangement of first collecting the lads out-of-doors, while accomplishing its intended purpose splendidly, carries the disadvantage of causing the worshipers to enter the edifice, not in the sedate small parties that build up ordinary church gatherings, but in practically one boisterous throng. The unanimity of this movement is especially marked in cold, snowy weather, which excites in the chilled, expectant crowd keen appreciation for the material comfort to be associated with the evening's spiritual warmth.

Accordingly, the incoming of the members occurs with something like a rush, during which (especially as some of the officers and others have reason for addressing their companions) it is impossible to prevent all unnecessary wagging of tongues.<sup>1</sup> And still it will be very sad if the boys, carried away by the activities of the occasion, make a bad start by engaging generally in unrestrained chatter. A simple instrument helpful to the situation is a bell small enough for the director's pocket. This little spokesman promptly turns all ears and eyes on its master and on the sign-warnings with which he checks

<sup>1</sup>In large societies the writer finds medals over-troublesome. In this particular the frontispiece is misleading. It illustrates the author's former practice, now discontinued.

enthusiasm that seems in danger of running dangerously high.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, much can be accomplished toward hastening the reign of silence and order by insisting on the rule that everybody, immediately after reaching his place, must kneel like a good Catholic and say a prayer. The devotional selection of the moment being left to each worshiper, we shall hardly expect him to begin the seven penitential psalms; nevertheless, while speaking to the Lord he will certainly not be "chinning" neighbors; and there is hope that, on rising from his knees, he will enter into the spirit of the place.

A still better measure toward straightening things out at the opening of the meeting is to plunge into the good work of the evening at once. As soon as there can be any pretence for claiming that most of the members have reached their places, begin with a hymn.

Further on I am going to advise that the musical part of the exercises be rendered by congregational singing, and will offer cheering proofs that such vocal effort can easily be made a great success; nevertheless it must be freely confessed that the opening hymn, judged from ordinary standpoints, almost always proves a dismal failure. A few of the boys arrive too late for it; more of them, though on hand, are not fully ready to begin. Still,

<sup>1</sup>At first thought this bell-idea may seem droll; however, it is, in the author's mind, of practical value for indoor management of boys. Very often their superior can nip trouble in the bud or enforce some unexpectedly desirable measure if only able to promptly dominate other sounds enough to make known his demand for immediate attention. This advantage, which loud vocal effort or energetic hand-clapping often fails of securing, is at once obtained by the gentle but ever distinctly heard sound of a little bell.



the director does better by ignoring this lack of perfect co-operation, for the hymn, even though sung with lesser volume and heart, is anyway a call to attention which, by harmoniously outdoing certain inharmonious rival sounds, serves as a sort of a musically pious wet blanket on the talk and levity carried in from the street.

#### SECTION IV—SHORT MEETINGS THE BEST

But the simplest possible effective move in favor of order consists in cutting the exercises down to suit an audience that discovers in brevity of religious doings a rich and deeply appreciated charm.

A shortening of the evening works wonders by depriving misbehavior of its opportunities, and thereby sparing the priest action that would force cheerfulness to the wall. For the average lad, once thoroughly aware that he has gotten himself into the church is largely given to the thought of getting out again; and if there seems danger of a prolonged stay his anxiety concerning the question of exit, while stifling attention to pious proceedings, inspires recourse to mischief—his natural panacea for all mundane difficulties and trials.

Better results are to be expected when our young hopeful starts out with entire confidence that his religious confinement will be very brief. The chances then are that, making a temporary suspension from out-of-the-way doings, he will really devote himself to the exercises being held.

Moved by these views, I would have meetings last very little longer than the half hour which, apparently, is demanded lest the spiritual work should

appear to the participants themselves ridiculously short. And while the service ought to fill at least the time just stated, it seemingly should not extend beyond forty-five minutes at most.

#### SECTION V—AN ORDER OF EXERCISES

But how will these moments, brief as they are, be acceptably and edifyingly filled? Directors, of course, will differ in their decisions on this very important point. The author, willingly stating his own practice for consideration, gives here the evening program he usually follows:

1. Hymn.
2. Informal Remarks.
3. Prayer.
4. Hymn.
5. Instruction.
6. Hymn.

It will be noticed that the list as just presented does not include Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, though, under episcopal favor, this service usually closes the meetings of pious societies in general. However, in the present instance, there will certainly be difficulty in having Benediction regularly. It leaves comparatively little of our necessarily shortened time for other exercises, especially for the instruction which here is of such special importance; and, by usually retaining the director within the sanctuary, deprives the boys, during most sacred moments, of the supervision their conduct should receive. Nevertheless, this beautiful devotion, if not of common occurrence, will be due at least on special occasions.

## CHAPTER XXV

### FEATURES OF THE SERVICE RENDERED BY THE BOYS THEMSELVES

#### SECTION I—SACRED SONG

IT is difficult to see how any young people's religious service can escape the heaviness which would be fatal to ours unless some form of sacred chant be included in the program.

A mistake is made, however, in supposing that this devout musical feature can be successfully furnished for the body of members by a separate choir composed either of picked lads or possibly of grown persons. Far better no singing whatever unless on the free-to-all "congregational" plan. Our juvenile friends, taken as a whole, will be far from interested in any party of vocalists gathered for their benefit, and if compelled to sit its warblings through are sure to provide an unwelcome accompaniment of levity in word and deed.

But the very lads who as an audience are hopelessly inappreciative of things musical become sufficiently willing or even very willing singers if only given a few easy, congenial hymns and permitted to do for themselves. It must be admitted that the wholly untrained choristers thus obtained are given rather to quantity than quality and consequently best pleased when imaginatively able to disturb things overhead; but, at any rate, they easily be-

come busy in harmoniously praising the Lord—busy enough to safeguard good conduct, and harmonious enough to greatly strengthen the tone of cheerful piety that the occasion demands.

Indeed, the great majority of boys in their teens have at command so much native vocal sweetness and strength combined that their united effort, when made with a will, always pleases the great mass of hearers. Nor is it even necessary to silence the erratic exceptions who, having “no ear,” sing at random. Unfortunates of this class, besides being very few, are never vociferous and can not mar the result noticeably for ordinary listeners. Once convinced on these points the director can pass hymn-books around with entire confidence that hardly anything more need be done.

## SECTION II—YOU CAN HAVE THE BOYS SING UNLESS A MUSICIAN

Of course it is likely that selections will have to be taught at the start and even from time to time afterward; but happily the great majority of organizers, though often unaware of the fact, are themselves really equipped for this undertaking.

Probably few who may think of making the attempt are of lesser promise than was the writer when he began under warning from musically trained friends, conversant with his inartistic shortcomings, that swift, flat failure would inevitably ensue. Encouraged, however, by the elementary character of the proposed task, the subject of these lugubrious predictions held to the anathematized

project and with the welcome result that from the first essay to the present time he has ever been fully master of the situation.

Almost everybody can sing a simple air and the boys' director, if gifted to that modest extent, is sufficiently equipped for operations. Let him not imagine it necessary for leadership to first acquire some mastery over the organ or the violin. Young people catch an air all the quicker when it is presented simply by the voice of one who sings—everybody joining with him—but a few bars at a time and with repetitions at every step until the entire piece is known.

To be sure the director who may be wholly at sea in the gamut will be considerably embarrassed by the need of depending, first, on an assistant to teach the hymns, and afterward on some of the boys to lead them; but, after all, even this somewhat handicapped individual is, for our particular case, in probable advantage over one who is a master of the art. The latter's stumbling-block lies in his anxiety to satisfy the niceties of musical taste. Dominated by this impulse he is very likely to drill his fickle followers with prolonged, dry rehearsals into desertion from the ranks.

"Don't make us sing," was the advice once spoken in the writer's hearing by an interested member to the new director of a sodality which a clerical Beethoven had left practically defunct. "Don't make us sing, for that was the thing what used to make all the fellows scoot." Extra well-equipped individuals will overdo things. Accordingly, we who have merely an elementary musical object in view are really blessed if so efficiently de-



fective as to rely on modest preparations in keeping with our modest aim.

### SECTION III—SECRETS OF THE SACRED CONSERVATORY

Set rehearsals are quite unnecessary. The very simple hymns that will answer can be easily learned during the course of regular meetings. And, even when confined to our ordinary gatherings, the work of mastering new selections must not be prolonged until it becomes wearisome. Five minutes seem about as many as should be devoted in any single session to this purpose; and since every hymn can be taught piecemeal it is feasible to deal with its different passages at successive rallies until the entire composition has become familiar. It is safe to assert that any new melody after having received its allotted five minutes in three or four consecutive assemblies will be found ready for ordinary use.

And fortunately the comparatively few evening gatherings recommended for a juvenile society do not call for a long list of hymns. A repertoire of twelve or fifteen will suffice; for, with that number in readiness and assuming that only a trio of selections be rendered on each occasion, the same hymn will be sung, perhaps, only four or five times a year. This amount of repetition, while not monotonous, proves helpful by forming fresh recruits into chanters; these being exercised in only a few melodies heard over and over at short intervals, soon do justice to the hymnals no less than their veteran companions.

Of course, when choosing material for divine service we should endeavor to provide devotional airs that are at the same time "catchy," but no matter how much some composition may please the ear it hardly merits acceptance if burdened with any passage that is notably high. Led by their constitutional repugnance to spirited effort outside of playtime, the common run of boy choristers lapse into rather abrupt silence on encountering vocal steps that mount considerably upward, and forthwith relinquish endeavor until easier traveling is reached.

In asserting the musical sufficiency, or even excellence, possessed by a promiscuous collection of untrained youthful male voices I have prudently made the reservation that the owners of these voices sing with a will; but, unfortunately, we are dealing with a class of humanity in which indifference and distractions combine easily, often, and successfully against hearty effort. While the priest will meet this difficulty chiefly by his own inspiring appeals, he may find exhortation seconded by the following expedients, which have given the writer valuable assistance.

Care can be taken to have every hymn come and go without tarrying long enough to lose its charm of novelty. Two stanzas of the same selection are entirely safe in this respect; further repetitions run just a little risk of encountering a listless reception. And due limitation placed on the number of stanzas serves variety still further by leaving time for an increase in the number of sacred pieces to be introduced; an evening is more enlivened by three hymns, two stanzas of each being

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sung, than by two hymns, each of them presenting three stanzas to be honored.

Another very simple departure from the beaten track by which one may sometimes stir up considerable emulation is an assignment of successive passages of the composition to different sections of the church in such a manner that each party of singers is heard for a little by itself, while, at other moments, all join together in chorus. As has already been remarked, the feature here recommended can be greatly enhanced by the co-operation of sanctuary boys not yet of age for places in the pews. These tyro lung-workers being conspicuously located are heard to advantage, and by rendering in solo style a few bars of their own add greatly to the general effect.

Comparatively few hymns seem to lend themselves to the special treatment just described, but as the method should anyway form the exception and not the rule its limited sphere of application need not cause regret. Matter sung as above will have to be printed with indications (preferably in a color different from that of the text) by which the members, especially the continuously arriving new ones, will be able to follow. In illustration of this plan the writer here offers a specimen stanza taken, with its "rubrics," from his own collection.

### MOTHER DEAR, O! PRAY FOR ME

*Gospel*—Mother dear, O! pray for me,

*Epistle*—Whilst far from Heav'n and thee,

*Gospel*—I wander in a fragile bark,

*Epistle*—O'er life's tempestuous sea;

*Altar* { O Virgin Mother, from thy  
*boys* { throne,

*All—So bright in bliss above,*

*Altar* { Protect thy child and cheer my  
*boys* { path,

*All* { *With thy sweet smile of love.*  
*Mother dear, remember me,*  
*And never cease thy care,*  
*'Till in heaven eternally*  
*Thy love and bliss I share.*

But rivalry, which the foregoing arrangement directly invites, can be developed even when all of the members are joined together in ordinary chorus. An expedient to this end, and one worthy of trial should responsiveness to the organ be on the wane, is had by inaugurating a formal vocal competition between the gospel and epistle sides of the church with a few prizes offered for distribution among the winners. This measure unfailingly stirs up an abundance of harmony, albeit of a somewhat muscular type; for in matters of art, sacred or otherwise, people must follow their ideals, and the boyish ideal of musical excellence is a park of artillery in full play.

SECTION IV—A SPECIAL HYMN-BOOK FOR YOUR  
OWN SOCIETY; ITS STRONG POINTS AND ITS  
DRAWBACK

As may have already occurred to the reader, my proposed plan of using but a few devout pieces and

only two stanzas of each has economical bearings on the matter of providing hymnals. A dozen or so of shortened selections which can be printed at slight cost in booklet form or on cards<sup>1</sup>—some thousands of them—are able to sign an edict of banishment for the comparatively bulky and expensive publications with which juvenile societies are commonly burdened.

Meanwhile, these homemade money savers offer additional advantages. They permit lettering for special guidance concerning matter to be sung, as above, by parties of boys heard in turn; and, besides, they enable the director to conveniently hold in a single set all of his chosen hymns which could hardly be found in any one collection elsewhere. And, then, the little hymn carriers are always easily handled; a convenience that will be more and more appreciated as the society grows in numbers. Quite a task is involved in placing and returning the two or three hundred somewhat cumbersome regular hymnals a society enjoying that figure of membership may have in use.

But, on the other hand, it must be confessed that the booklet here advocated is doomed to encounter serious ill-treatment at the hands of the flock. I freely assert that short, engaging meetings are never signalized by the slightest injury done the pews or other church fixtures; but, for all that, the destructiveness of religiously confined immaturity is constantly visited on the hymnals which seem

<sup>1</sup>The writer much fears that printed cards, though he has never made trial of them, must prove a troublesomely attractive mark for the destructive mania considered in this section.



to be instinctively classified with school-books and, therefore, with the opposition.

Strange to say, the reverend superintendent finds the present attack scarcely ever one of penciling or tearing, but nearly always made on the bindings (whether of thread or wire) which, in prints of only twelve or sixteen pages, are necessarily so exposed and yielding as to strongly tempt investigators in their teens. Meanwhile, one notes with relief that this mischief is of lesser gravity as being worked, it would seem, by the restless fingers of individuals whose thoughts are fairly well given to the exercises.

No doubt the undesirable practice could be wholly checked, but likely at the expense of sustained disciplinary effort antagonistic to the tone of cheerfulness the meetings paramountly demand. Besides, as the friendly enemy almost invariably leaves the different parts of the injured booklets intact, the expense of new thread bindings is very light. And it can be borne the more willingly for the reason that the simple repairs involved are readily made by needy individuals to whom occupation will be a charity.

#### SECTION V—AT PRAYER

There is no disparagement of somewhat prolonged devotions (*e.g.*, the sublimely simple five decades of the rosary) in declaring that, while eminently suitable to other congregations, they are of deterrent effect on a less fervent but numerically respectable part of our following, and consequently should be excluded from the scope of the boys' re-

ligious gathering. However, the above drawback does not attach to the recitation of very short prayers like, for instance, a single decade of the beads; accordingly, some such easy item of divine service should be rendered, and by the members themselves, if their meeting is to acquire a becoming, spiritual tone.

The necessity of this pious feature having been determined let us see how it can be best obtained. In many instances the plan first thought of is the rather ceremonious and special one of placing in a front seat three readers who, acting in concert and after the manner adopted by sodalities, lead in the recitation of the Office of the Blessed Virgin or of some other passage not of everyday use. It will be found, however, that this form of devotion, besides probably proving of prohibitory duration, can not with ease be permanently maintained. To begin with it involves the burden of furnishing office books or other special prints for the rank and file who, unless so supplied, will utterly fail of repeating the responses, etc., with any kind of heart.

But here the chief difficulty lies in providing a plurality of readers to lead conjointly. Individual competent boys are by no means plentiful, for owing to timidity or other causes most youngsters are really unable, save with some special training, to interpret the printed page publicly with the efficiency required. Besides the constant ebb and flow of membership continually replaces tried helpers with successors entirely new to the task. Finally, after a co-operative working staff has been secured and placed in commission, there is no well-founded assurance of its full presence when wanted; any

evening one or more of the trusted leaders may be absent and no substitute available, in which case the devout exercises must drag heavily from weakness at its source.

Far more, then, will be accomplished by stripping the devotions of all that is ceremonious and exceptional and confining them to the short, common prayers entirely familiar to the members; such as the already suggested decade of the beads, the litany of the Holy Name—which, however, might be somewhat curtailed—or the litany of the Blessed Virgin. Pious selections of this kind, since they are known by heart or at most call for the brief responses “pray for us,” etc., immediately ease the situation by dispensing with all need of books; and while not eliminating leadership they so simplify the same that it can be supplied without difficulty.

Prayers in ordinary use demand comparatively small reading ability and at the same time permit by their primitive arrangement that on all occasions a single devout spokesman-in-chief will suffice. Nevertheless, the director manages advisedly to have two such functionaries appointed. This double provision, made ostensibly in order that the associated “sky pilots” heard at alternate meetings may relieve each other, is fully justified as a measure grounding hope that at least one prayer-leader will always be on hand.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE MEETING ADDRESSED

#### SECTION I—MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS

THE boys' meeting, in common with those of other religious bodies, can be addressed in two different ways. It offers occasion for a set of general remarks on the society's doings, both secular and spiritual, and also for a short formal religious instruction or exhortation. The first of these verbal features is advantageously placed at the beginning of our session; for, inasmuch as dealing largely with topics of absorbing interest—the various attractions going—the general remarks, if made early, do much toward popularizing prompt attendance. Human nature, though little astir regarding gains for the next world, is abundantly eager concerning those to be secured here below.

Nor need it be feared that statements made in church on baseball, athletics, entertainments, prizes, etc., must of necessity prove out of keeping with the sacred place. Such, doubtless, would be the result were these things dealt with in a boyish spirit; but evil effects do not follow, when the speaker, by temperately reserved treatment of the trifles in question as well as by his habitual and openly expressed aim of subordinating them to holy purposes, makes it plain that their consideration holds no place of honor.

Besides, on such occasions even the mere secular

front of natural attractions can serve a higher purpose by being made to point to things purely spiritual, as when, *e.g.*, the hearers are opportunely reminded that their organization is not to be joined for the sports, prizes, etc., just brought to their attention, but for blessings of a far superior order; that an athletic body is unspeakably less desirable than a soul strong in virtue, and that earthly amusements are but a shadow of lasting joys to come.

Moreover, the reverend announcer can do still better by tarrying a little in the religious fields which secular topics will have approached and will have helped him to enter. Speaking of the society's badge he pictures the public conduct—cleanness of speech, freedom from profanity, hat lifted before church or priest—expected of one known to be a Catholic boy; arranging for games, he is permitted to exhort his hearers to throw the earnestness given their sports into the various duties of home, employment, or school; or, proclaiming a coming election, the zealous leader may avail himself of the opportunity for wholesome advice as to the kind of companions a lad should admire and imitate, and so on.

These miscellaneous remarks are still more perfectly rescued from discredit by the fact that much of their subject-matter, being of a strictly religious character, permits real doctrinal instruction to be given under cover of announcements of interest to all. For example:—One must at regular intervals give notice of the society's communion day fixed by rule; this proceeding invites a few explanatory words on the sacraments of Penance and Holy



Eucharist. Boys can not be held at church meetings without hearing at least occasional reminders regarding behavior at the same; such admonitions lead to unfolding the reason why presence before the tabernacle demands genuflections, silence, and seriousness, not merely at present, but throughout the lives of the auditors. Dues must be collected; any announcements concerning them furnishes a text for instruction on the Fifth Commandment of the Church. Equally profitable lessons can be derived from statements necessarily made concerning other religious affairs.

#### SECTION II—THE BEST OF ATTENTION SECURED

I would not wish to close this passage without insisting on the fact underlying present views. It is that talks on the "business affairs" of the organization engage the members excellently well. Indeed in my own sodality the moments during which all give ear to the above practical affairs are chosen for whatever would distract from simple religious instruction. The attendance books are then marked; ballots, tickets, or other such articles are distributed; but even these doings, usually so unfavorable to quiet and attention, do not prevent minds from being well given to the director's remarks.

Now this heed given to secular topics is necessarily extended to associated spiritual subjects, with the result that the latter are all the better grasped and retained. Preachers accustomed to address young hopefuls of the sterner sex, are well aware of the difficulty encountered in really mastering

their attention. It does not at all suffice that discipline deprives the restless hands of distracting objects and turns the beardless faces directly toward the speaker; too often, the minds that were to be impressed are excursive to the extent of missing much, if not all, that is delivered.

We shall, then, gladly note that for even the most serious passages of the mixed talk now considered, very fair attention is assured. Our young friends are taken by surprise, as it were. While giving ear actively and greedily to the great facts of this world—games, gifts, or whatever else may be on hand—they are at every moment and in the midst of their mental alertness shunted off to facts that make for the world to come.

In consequence, miscellaneous remarks on routine matters furnish an excellent opportunity. The author is, for his own part, so well satisfied on this point, that were it entirely feasible to regulate internal affairs by another means, *e.g.*, a printed bulletin, he would much prefer the old-style announcements and would continue to make them simply for their efficiency as a medium of religious instruction and appeal.

### SECTION III—THE FORMAL INSTRUCTION

Naturally enough, the "miscellaneous remarks" of the last section will always be simple, somewhat entertaining, and brief; my best advice in regard to the second verbal instalment of the meeting, the formal exhortation or instruction, is that it also be made to embody the three same features.

The last-named of the trio of desirable qualities is of course the one most easily secured. The preacher may find some difficulty in bringing himself to the extreme of simplicity advocated below and as much, if not far more, in giving his sermons a sufficiently attractive cast, but at least he can always set and keep the time limit at will. Some ten or fifteen minutes of serious considerations is about as much as a group of city boys will bear peacefully, and the director should not venture much further unless safeguarded by suitable illustrative matter which of course affords sure protection for perilous homiletic pathways.

The instruction, in addition to its brevity, ought to be melted down to absolute simplicity in point of both matter and expression. To be sure, preachers preparing themselves to address beginners in life always choose easily understood subjects, but it is again quite certain that as a rule the same preachers are indifferent to an equally needful extreme plainness in the use of words. This mistake, ruinous to good results, argues oversight of a juvenile shortcoming almost as evident as the existence of the juveniles themselves.

The language ordinarily used by educated speakers is really beyond the firm grasp of boys in their teens. Of course the unpreparedness of the latter for out and out "jawbreakers" will be unanimously conceded; as everybody knows, our young friends rarely tackle an able-bodied polysyllabic for a fight to a finish save when they meet that enemy in the school-speller and groan. And even in regard to simpler words, the immature community, after having gained as many of these as suffice for practical

needs, is slow in mastering more, just as the grown public is slow, as a whole, in familiarizing itself with the new-fangled names of freshly-exploited commercial articles advertised in prints and public places. Hence, juveniles lean so much to the shortest articles of speech as to give a number of the same exclusive right of way while treating equivalents or quasi-equivalents, though only one syllable longer, as interlopers that deserve to be "cut." Illustration of this view is seen in the treatment accorded such pairs of words as *build, erect; chase, pursue; dress, raiment; feast, banquet*.

Clearly, then, the boys' preacher, besides limiting himself to words very commonly employed, wisely takes the further step of cultivating the use of the very shortest of these common terms. I would have him adhere so closely to this rule as to tolerate the inelegant repetition of an entirely familiar term rather than admit its less perfectly known synonym; far better to be clear tautologically than not to be clear at all.

To be sure a few words of troublesome length—*supernatural, incarnation, infallibility, etc.*—hold such an important place in pulpit deliverances as to perhaps demand respect; if used, however, they can and ought to be explained in simpler terms. Furthermore, the preacher should be guarded in employing figures of speech. If, as easily happens, his metaphors refer to persons and things more or less unknown to the audience, the metaphors really tend to darken the subject on which they are expected to throw light.

SECTION IV—SOME DISREGARD DUE SIMPLICITY;  
OTHERS FAIL TO ACQUIRE IT

As the foregoing view openly finds fault with the style of speech very often adopted by those who give religious instruction to parish juveniles in their teens, there should be no surprise if voices against the view be raised. It may be urged that young people are not such laggards in the vernacular but that they grasp most of the terms used by their elders and interpret unfamiliar expressions by means of the context of the discourse.

I may deal with this defense by asking how its promoters would fare had they to listen to a public deliverance in which, owing to the speaker's distance or physical weakness, his words would frequently fall short. To be sure the adult meets this difficulty by stretching his ears; but the boy, on meeting with it, merely stretches himself and starts on mental travels elsewhere—unless, of course, he perceives something to be opportunely done with his neighbor's cap.

Meanwhile, spiritual teachers who may be convinced of the need of fully accommodating their speech to youthful exigencies are reminded that due simplicity of expression does not come with the mere realization, no matter how keen, of its necessity. This truth, though apparently plain enough, is very commonly overlooked. To judge from the oft-occurring failures made by persons really alive to the demands of the situation, we might almost believe them to fancy that at the command of their will all of the less common words drop temporarily



from memory, leaving only the most ordinary ones ready for use.

On the contrary, be assured nobody will reach the absolute simplicity required for the ordinary run of boys unless with active endeavor. Here, as elsewhere, self-adaptation becomes easy with practice; nevertheless, it will hardly be enjoyed at the start save by a preacher who gives himself the trouble of writing beforehand the words to be used, or at least of carefully picking them out in advance. And whether in the earlier or later years of the apostolate, the process of passing from the ordinary language of intelligent adults to the elementary clearness of expression here called for demands an amount of effort and care almost comparable to that involved in translating from one tongue into another.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE STORY INSTRUCTION:—VERY HELPFUL AND EASILY HAD

#### SECTION I—A DEEPLY-FELT WANT

IT IS entirely safe to assert that the wide world over there has never been a juvenile society director of any experience but has keenly felt the necessity of enlivening his instructions with stories, whether drawn from fiction or from fact. At the same time there is a common complaint of an almost complete dearth of illustrative matter suitable to parish boys in their teens. This complaint has occasioned the present chapter and the following one, both of which are offered with the hope of providing relief.

But to deal with the matter intelligently we must first of all note that the entertaining accessories universally employed by those who address young people are in our particular field of new and special importance. The present audience is not made up of school-boys moved to attendance and attention by external discipline and superior mental equipment, but of all sorts, including usually a preponderance of youngsters whose presence at meetings is practically with no backing save their own good will. Moreover, the parish juniors now considered are not to hear a missionary father or other visitor clothed *ex officio* with special power to draw and enthuse; these slippery members of the congregation are to be profitably located and kept within the

range of their own director's tiresomely familiar voice.

Obviously these differences call for corresponding adaptation of treatment. In the presence of lads assembled under the more favorable of the above circumstances enlivening features are of lesser consequence; such features will then do if fitted for their ordinary functions of helping to elucidate and permanently imprint the subject-matter while stimulating the attention of hearers who, in virtue of some spontaneity, are already appreciably with the speaker. But, when the juvenile church society is to be addressed, entertaining items ought if possible to perform the more elementary service of helping to attract the intended auditors within ear-shot. Furthermore, they must certainly be relied on to gain and hold attention which, in the case of the present hearers, is supported by no spontaneity whatever and to be had only while coaxed. It follows that for the special purpose before us entertaining items should possess the very highest of such natural interest as boy-nature appreciates most.

The criterion thus obtained directs preachers of ordinary power to but one form of illustration; it is the narration of stirring incidents. For no matter what may be justly said of other departments of literature, the accounts just named—the stock in trade of successful juvenile-writers—are the only ones calculated to be warmly appreciated by the average youngster.

Unfortunately, the accepted criterion operates largely against the sources of illustration sure to be first thought of; I mean the Sacred Scriptures

and the lives of the saints in their original forms. To be sure these revered documents abound in events of a thrilling kind (miracles, martyrdoms, and the like), but, after all, the same events are usually thrilling in their supernatural bearings alone and do not prove intensely moving from a merely natural point of view.

This is but another way of saying that the essential character of the inspired Book and the saints' biographies prevent them from rendering extensively the special service now required. They have been written, not for the purpose of pleasing the reader, but to state the truth; and consequently have only infrequently occasion to picture situations (*e.g.*, villains thwarted, parted dear ones reunited, poverty suddenly replaced by wealth) of the highest dramatic interest. Of course biblical and hagiological passages should be utilized, but for the purpose of bettering the hearers rather than of drawing them; for usually such passages prove really attractive to only a few boys already happily grounded in the piety with which we would inspire the crowd.

## SECTION II—SEEKING RELIEF

And, while illustrations must first of all present highly colored transactions, it is not at all to be imagined that our auditors are indifferent regarding the classes of persons made to appear. Juveniles always much prefer to follow heroes fashioned after juvenile ideals, and these, sad though it sometimes be, are soldiers, sailors, robbers, detectives, circus performers, theatrical people, and

other worthies or unworthies of more or less desperate make. Furthermore, even the foregoing *personæ gratae* can do little for the cause unless permitted to play their parts in the midst of the stirring occupations after which they are named.

Doubtless this reasoning as to the cause of the existing famine has to some extent foreshadowed the writer's plan by which the situation may be materially improved. Frankly recognizing the "taking" story as a much-needed helper in the parish boys' instructional field, he would, for most occasions but not invariably, utilize suitable recitals boldly appropriated from the shelves of clean, popular fiction; he would so combine these selections (shortened to suit) with the presentation of religious matter as to make each of the former begin, keep pace, and finish with its allied exposition of one or more catechetical or moral topics.

Accordingly, every such auxiliary accepted from profane authors is to stand this essential test:—by openly inculcating some moral lesson, or by native readiness to be found suggestive in the desired direction, or by a make-up permitting favorable modification, the selection must provide sufficient support for a fair allowance of associated spiritual pabulum.<sup>1</sup> Hence the resulting form of discourse seems appropriately called "Story Instruction." It amounts to a close partnership of the entertaining narrative with religious teaching. By co-operative agreement the story—which enacts the part of

<sup>1</sup>Though the remark may be altogether unnecessary, adoption of this suggestion can never give ground for conscientious concern. Literary alterations made by an individual for his personal use before others constitute no infringement either legal or moral on the rights of authors.



senior partner and leads the way—is silent when something better than its own outgivings is to be said while the instruction often pauses (though never unbecomingly long) for its companion's needful support. Together, they form a wholesome combination to which boys are forced to open first their ears and afterward usually their minds and hearts.

### SECTION III—EDIFYING “PLAGIARISM”

Naturally it is to be expected that some who may adopt the proposed way of doing will at first experience difficulty in engrafting religious matter on the literary contributions at hand. Hence the writer would facilitate things by offering at least a few expedients each of which, as is believed, will, by a process of development or by more radical treatment, bring a number of tales into readiness for use.

First of all, embarrassment should quickly disappear regarding accounts that seem to actually bid for patronage by formally devoting themselves to the support of one of the virtues or to warfare against some vice. Here the preacher has merely to improve and enlarge on the moral view already presented. If in the story worldly-wise integrity has been placed on the pedestal, he shows honesty to be “the best policy” for the next life, more even than for this, and gives matters a most practical turn by explaining, *e.g.*, the thief's obligation of making restitution. Should drunkenness in its earthly results have been pilloried, the priest (or religious brother) passes from that phase of the

subject to the spiritual ruin worked by intoxication and perhaps takes up the question of the total abstinence pledge.

Another inexpensive way of making the secular narrative look heavenward is by leading the audience to freely draw from the plot certain religious considerations that the turns of the plot are easily found to suggest. Thus the history of a murderous attempt brings to mind the hatefulness of the Evil One, or the malice of bad example; a description of watchful care exercised under thrilling circumstances over life or property bespeaks the protection accorded us by our guardian angels; and so on. Clearly one is always able to give full consideration from the spiritual viewpoint to the foregoing "hatred," "malice," "protection" or the like, without finding need of impairing in any way the flesh and blood interest of the helpful theme that has served as his starting point. Indeed the present way of managing involves no change whatever in the priest's literary selection and does no more than reverse the usual co-ordination of pulpit-matter. Instead of delivering instruction that introduces a story, his Reverence now relates a story that introduces instruction.

On the other hand, the remaining proposals here offered for the important task of pressing fiction into service demand actual departures from the printed pages concerned, but such slight departures, let me add, as will tax ingenuity no more than slightly. Thus I now offer for any tale of requisite susceptibility this modicum of treatment that it be retouched merely to the extent of causing its hero or one of his associates to be effectively moved by the

spiritual suggestions of his environment. By means of this gentle liberty taken with the text a lad stung by false accusation of theft realizes thereby the enormity of some vice he has really been practising but in secret; or a reckless adventurer facing almost certain death conceives thereby the idea of intelligent, fervent recourse to perfect contrition; and possibly becomes so fully alive to the vanities of this world as to henceforth pine for the religious life.

Clearly the present method attaches the spiritual element to the profane element more effectively than does the method just preceding. A group of boys, albeit under the preacher's guidance, may be a bit slow in perceiving by a sort of discovery of their own that certain circumstances in the story bespeak certain religious views; but the group will never miss any religious-course thought, spoken or acted by an acceptable performer whom an acceptable story has placed before them. It is to be noted that once an addition of this kind has been made to the plot, a corresponding addition must follow. It belongs to the "fitness of things" that the character who has been led to draw a practical moral lesson from his environment be afterward enabled to make some dramatic display of his new spiritual status, by which display the fact of the character's betterment will be grandly and edifyingly confirmed.

A proceeding somewhat similar to that just explained is proposed by my fourth and final recipe for whipping fiction-passages into line. Many of these passages will permit one of the persons represented, presumably the hero, to cherish at-

tachment to something pious—Mass or holy communion, the beads or scapulars, daily advertence to the four last things, etc.—or to some vice; and the mere statement of such attachment will always suffice for the introduction of ample explanation of the sacrament, sacramental, doctrine, or wrong doing that is shown as being held in favor. Now if, as must often happen, the plot thus altered at the start will permit a further variation or two by which, *e.g.*, Mass, or holy communion or the scapulars, etc., triumphantly produces its hoped-for results or by which vice is sternly rebuked, then the creation of a very effective "Story Instruction" is assured.

In closing at this point my suggestions for dealing with the printed auxiliary I must emphatically declare that these little processes, ventured because of their separate handy bearing on a number of profane recitals, do not at all limit our ability to control such recitals; on the contrary they leave a wide field for the inventiveness that will change the characters and doings of the fiction-world in ways apart from the foregoing and hardly reducible to any sort of general rule.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The choice of necessary selections may, perhaps, be helpfully guided by the following remarks. It is not advisable to rely exclusively on juvenile books. Suitable incidents may quite as frequently be yielded by matter prepared for adults; though, of course, when affairs can be so arranged, it will usually be preferable to picture the hero as a boy.

While it is of little consequence what number of minor actors are made to rise and then disappear for good, care should be taken not to admit anything requiring too many leading characters. Auditors of a narrative, unlike its readers, can not go over names, etc., a second time in order to imprint them well on the memory, and easily become confused if invisible performers in considerable numbers must be followed.

And, finally, many a director might most hopefully strive for self-support in the present matter by writing little "charmings" of his own.<sup>1</sup> Here assuredly nothing will be lost by experimenting; so if one has never attempted the task why should he not give it trial? And there is much encouragement in the fact that the spiritual guide, being in touch with boys in their teens, brings to the proposed undertaking a gift of practical discernment to forecast what is likely to "take" and what would certainly fall flat. With such preparation he may, in this particular field, easily equal or

The adaptation of promising productions includes not only the task already suggested, of turning them into the simplest of English, but also the frequent one of pruning the originals of details little or not at all interesting to boys. These hearers are very far from demanding the carefully prepared descriptions of persons or the historical, geographical, and climatic shadings by which authors place their characters and scenes in accurately arranged settings. All that our young friends care for is simply to know whom the story is about and what happened to him. Indeed, further information thrust upon them is likely to be regarded as a sort of imposition on good nature.

Pursuing the same course still further, I would consult the spiritual tone of the entire deliverance by denuding the entertaining element as much as may be without sacrificing either its clearness or its interest. To this end one replaces many a conversation with a condensed statement of its gist, runs by questions that are clearly understood in their answers, and in other ways keeps the performers in brief, rapid movement.

In this connection let me submit that, while the actors must always be plainly indicated, there is good reason for pointing them out when possible by the informal terminology of business or professional occupations, etc., rather than by the more complimentary use of family names. By treating the characters of the story with the scantest of sufficient courtesy the speaker does much toward emphasizing the fact that, like players paid to enliven the feast, they are given a hearing not for their own sakes but for a service rendered.

<sup>1</sup>At the date of this book's publication the author's "Story Instructions" founded on original tales are appearing in the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*.



even surpass far abler writers not on the same close footing with the special class addressed.

SECTION IV—THE "LONG" STORY—AN UNOBJECTIONABLE AND EFFECTIVE CALL TO ATTENTION

No shock need be experienced from the fact that in the "Story Instruction" the narrative alone proves to be of a length quite unusual with pulpit illustrations. This result has been clear from the start. The recital is required to produce at least one situation highly interesting to boys, but this the recital can rarely accomplish unless under favor of a material development far outdoing that of the ten-sentence pious legends almost exclusively in vogue.

Neither can such development be rated objectionable unless the fiction-passage be given right of way regardless of the two following limitations which are absolutely called for. First, as has been remarked earlier, the lighter element of the "Story Instruction" must leave a sufficiency of space for adequate appearances on the part of its more important companion. To this restraint add the condition demanded by religious proprieties that the entertaining selection must never keep the floor to the extent of forcing the preacher to tarry unbecomingly on a continuous stretch of secular details. But the latter incongruity, like the former, has been obviated by the submitted plan, which provides that the higher element shall be united with the lower one so closely as to give every profane incident the evident mission of aiding some

near-by spiritual matter. Hence, in the present form of discourse, the length of the secular auxiliary can never give priests the appearance of entertaining for entertainment's sake alone and, consequently, can not detract from the seriousness their sacred calling demands.

Happily, when compliance with the foregoing conditions has qualified the well-grown helper from the popular library, there is an increase of advantage in the fact that the same printed helper gathers into a single extended plot the entire evening's allowance of sugary encouragements rather than leaving them to be given out through the medium of two or more shorter accounts. For in the present instance the concentration of good things is desirable as endowing the heavily and beneficently laden sole recital with unrivaled efficacy in continuously riveting to the speaker the thoughts of his giddy auditors.

My assertion in this particular will be fully credited by those familiar with the fluctuations of interest that usually occur in the juvenile gathering accordingly as it is treated homiletically to desert or to plain fare. A general straightening up and a hush of extra breathless attention invariably greets the newly born item of illustration at its very first appearance in dry environment. To be sure this movement, as betraying some mercenary regard for the preacher's words, is not wholly satisfactory; still it is, all things considered, of a progressive nature and therefore need not excite complaint.

But, alas! a serious drawback is in waiting; the rapt attention easily obtained for the story weakens

abruptly and painfully as soon as directed to religious applications of the same. No matter how deftly the director may pass from the festive notes of fiction to the everyday "humdrum" of Christian doctrine and practice, the transition is almost certainly attended with a visible return of former indifference.

Evidently the exhorter's main hope with such uncertain hearers is his preparedness to keep them in a state of constant expectation. If able to stand in seeming permanent readiness to draw from an unfailing reserve fund of entertaining matter, he will always be followed lest something worth hearing should slip. Now this vantage position is secured far better by the interwoven events of a single extended tale than by a plurality of equally interesting but wholly disjointed incidents. Each of the latter comes and goes without power to speak for its fellows yet to appear; neither will the preacher feel able to suffix any enlivening item with the announcement that more of the kind are to come.

But my new form of pulpit endeavor, founded as it is on some considerably developed fictional passage, serves the desired notice automatically. It begins by unfolding an account which, though subject to interruptions, is seen to have a future; this live narrative, then, makes the speaker's "reserve fund" a gladsome reality and is sure to concentrate attention on every word he utters, at least until the entertainment-curtain has dropped.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>As it is obviously important to guard against an undignified peroration, care should be taken in handling the last installment of illustrative matter. If the boys perceive it to be final—and they soon come to know the time limit as well as the

These considerations it is hoped show that, for the present audience, the customary instruction enlivened by disconnected short illustrative items makes a poor second to the one here offered. The former discourse is little calculated to draw hearers; the latter does much toward gathering them. Furthermore, the established form of endeavor fails to keep auditors constantly on the alert, while its "upstart" rival scarcely ever lets them miss any point of doctrinal exposition or devotional appeal.

At the present point, however, let us hear a critic not yet won over. "There is nothing in all this," he will urge, "to prevent the fictional element of a deliverance from actually outmeasuring the religious element." Certainly not; provided, of course, the latter is allotted enough space that it can be effectively proclaimed. Once more let me place a reminder that we are not providing for congregations that gather easily and listen well, but for congregations that gather with difficulty and hardly listen at all. Why be alarmed that a lesser amount of soul-aiding truth is expressed when a larger amount of the same is heard and absorbed?

preacher himself—any prolonged deductions invite restless movements and unsuppressed yawns expressive of a premature and almost irreverent amen. Accordingly, it is an advantage if the very last words spoken are those of the expiring story. When this can not be, I would try to make the necessary application consist of two or three telling sentences placed on display abruptly and before the listeners have had time to take alarm.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE STORY INSTRUCTION CONSIDERED UNDER A SPECIAL FORM

#### SECTION I—A SELECTION THAT BOYS WILL FOLLOW

BECOMING at this point so bold as to attempt the illustration of an illustrative attempt, I am going to ask readers to tarry while a Story Instruction is being prepared from its start to almost its finish.

This course is chosen in order to show *en passant* and by an object lesson what encouragingly slight changes in the details of a profane passage will sometimes so transform it as to make it deal, at every turn, with matters pertaining to our Faith. But the chief purpose of the undertaking is to apply the new plan for evangelizing youth after a fashion especially liable to provoke criticism, which criticism will be considered further on. By means of such an exhibit, seemingly, I shall be all the more easily understood later when formulating the predicted objection and making reply to the same.

Entering, then, upon the proposed task we must first of all appropriate the required suitably interesting secular recital. The one selected runs as follows:

“Years ago a gentleman, strolling in Central Park, New York City, happened to rest on a bench near the Arsenal and there dozed off. However, the supposed sleeper became enough awake to



catch a man trying to pick his pocket and had the latter arrested. The next day, strangely enough, the gentleman who had caused the arrest refused to appear in court against the other and openly declared himself very glad to see the prisoner released. His reason for this was that the pick-pocket had proved to be, beyond all doubt, a worthy but very poor person who had only attempted to obtain as much as was necessary to keep himself, his wife, and children from starving. In fact the kind-hearted individual who had declined making any charge pushed his charity much further, giving great assistance to the well-meaning pickpocket and his family. The wife and children were supplied with food and clothing, while the man himself received employment by which he was enabled to make a new and most successful start in life.

"After several years, those here mentioned were far apart and had wholly dropped from one another's knowledge. The person once so kindly treated, having risen to be a very wealthy merchant, was residing in one of our western States. Meanwhile, the gentleman whose goodness we have seen had left this country for a distant land where, unfortunately, he lost all of his property and became penniless.

"A long time after the foregoing arrest the western merchant, happening to be back in New York on a business trip, took a walk through Central Park rather late in the evening and found himself near the Arsenal, where the turning point of his life had occurred in such a strange way. Reaching the place he reflected:—'Since the affair

happened, twenty-five summers have come and gone. Of course after so many years this can not be the same bench, but anyway it stood right here. Now thank God,' he continued while seating himself, 'I am very far from needing to repeat what I once did at this spot.' Then resting his head like one asleep the gentleman gave himself up to thoughts on the past.

"While so occupied, he saw that a man who had been at the opposite end of the bench was getting nearer and nearer. Still the merchant pretended not to notice, and after a little the other tried the supposed sleeper's pocket. No doubt the pick-pocket would have been arrested only that the intended victim was moved by reflections concerning the past. 'How like my own affair!' he thought; 'possibly this criminal is no worse than I was, and deserves as much kindness as was shown myself!'

"Accordingly, the western man, instead of calling on the police, spoke kindly to the pickpocket, who at once declared that he was starving and asked for one dollar. 'I shall oblige you most willingly,' answered the merchant, taking the bill from his vest pocket. 'Thanks! that will do,' muttered the other as he withdrew with what had been received. But the giver soon found that he had made a mistake. By taking from the wrong pocket, he had given, not one dollar, as was intended, but a one-hundred dollar bill instead.

"The next morning the loser, looking over the morning paper, read the following curious and, to him, very interesting advertisement: 'The man who needed money last evening and received by

mistake one hundred dollars in place of the single dollar that was asked for will be found in the basement of the address given below. If the gentleman who gave the one hundred dollars will kindly call he will receive his money back.'

"The merchant, much pleased to find that he had to deal with a 'pickpocket' as free from evil intentions as he himself had been when driven to the same course, went at once to the address given; where, in friendly meeting with the money seeker of the previous evening, he found that the latter was no other than his friend and benefactor; the very person through whom, a quarter of a century before, he had been placed under arrest and afterward made the recipient of so much kindness. This excellent soul, having become penniless, and through ill health unable to work, had been promised that within half a week he would be given a place in a charity home; however, the poor man had nothing at all to live on during the three or four days that remained before the institution could accept him. Pushed by want, he had first turned to begging, but gaining nothing by that course had gone after dark near the Arsenal to try for money by the same means once practised there on himself; this with the result of meeting the much-esteemed friend of former days by whom the money-taking lesson had been taught.

"As for the merchant, he greatly rejoiced in the opportunity thus afforded of repaying overflowing the kindness long since extended to himself and his dear ones in their period of woe. The second well-meaning pickpocket of our story no longer

needed the charity home for which he had been booked; at that very moment he was taken into the western family to become one of its members for the rest of his life."

## SECTION II—REJECTED AND ACCEPTED

Here, then, is a recital which is doubtless of the kind congenial to boys—it begins and ends with apparent rascality—what more can be asked?—but now comes the question, how is the same to be utilized before a congregation of juveniles? A priest wedded to the established usage regarding illustrative matter will have to answer this query with a regretful shake of the head. It is, of course, clear to him that, with explanation of the licitness of taking from the neighbor for immediate relief in extreme need, the story's happy close would set off a discourse on the seventh commandment. But, then, the story's happy close proves to be practically out of reach. In other words the present examiner finds that the account, even though it be of a helpful tone, is too long; how can he dream of taking the audience through the round dozen of unbroken secular details that lie between the opening of the tale and its sufficiently acceptable termination? From the ordinary viewpoint, then, this specimen along with a multitude of similar interesting creations which it represents is condemned as being sterile of assistance.

But, meanwhile, the question how to utilize the given recital is answered confidently by him who has entered into the idea of the Story Instruction. To be sure, the latter worker will hardly be able to

apply in the present instance any one of the last chapter's four methods for rendering secular accounts available; but, as has been remarked, those methods by no means limit the Story-Instruction builder's activity. On further examination, then, our enterprising investigator perceives, as may be assumed, that the account before us can be fully attuned to his purpose by a couple of apparently unimportant additions to as many of the personalities represented. By these alterations the gentleman who first showed kindness becomes a Protestant minister, while the recipient of the clergyman's kindness as well as the recipient's family are pictured as earnest practical Catholics. Having changed things to this slight extent, the Story Instructor forthwith proceeds to gather figs and grapes where his predecessors in the boy-saving apostolate have seen only thistles and thorns.

### SECTION III—UNDER TREATMENT

Developments resulting from the above modifications will furnish religious topics with inviting settings as follow:

In practising charity toward the first "villain" that appears in the piece and the "villain's" dear ones, the non-Catholic clergyman was as usual associated with members of his non-Catholic flock. Naturally these together with their reverend leader pressed the beneficiaries to attend the Protestant church, the young people for Sunday-school and their parents for regular service. The invitation, however, was gently but firmly declined by the



Catholic clients whose steadfast refusal now supplies an excellent opportunity for explaining the duty of the faithful in the matter at issue.

But the inability of the conscientious family to follow its benefactors churchward only stimulated practical gratitude in another direction. From that time on the parents and children kept the daily practice, when gathered for devotions, of praying for their kind friends, and especially for the minister himself, that God would grant them the gift of the true Faith. Here it is entirely feasible to discourse on prayer, especially as a striking response to the present appeal easily follows.

According to the original account the *personæ dramatis* drift, in the course of years, far apart. So we are free to send the minister for missionary work to distant China where, by becoming a Catholic and at the loss of means of livelihood, he provides on the one hand an answer to the petition of his old-time friends and, on the other, a good text for describing the gladly-borne sufferings of our confessors and martyrs.

And, finally, when the former clergyman's honest return of money given by mistake has inculcated a closing edifying lesson, we realize that our story as a whole has been made helpful to religion far beyond its weak original promise. United in close companionship with higher matter, the passage can no longer be accused of offering any objectionable stretch of unbroken secular details, but rather at every step its entire precious hold on attention is made over to the consideration of this or that religious subject.

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### SECTION IV—RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS ARE PRESENTED BECOMINGLY WHEN THEY SEEM SO TO THE BOYS

And, now that my specimen discourse has been fully outlined, let us look to a difficulty which it raises; and which, indeed, it has from the start been announced to present for consideration. Some observers, while accepting the Story Instruction in its general plan, will condemn the same instruction under the special form just presented. Such critics will take the ground that in the given instance the religious element of the deliverance has been unbecomingly subjected to weathercock-like illustrative leadership that looks in various directions almost at once.

They would make the point that, while recourse may be licitly had to narratives each of which lends itself throughout and dignifiedly to some single definite point of serious teaching, the narrative just utilized (together with the rest of the same class) should be rated ineligible since it provides no two incidents able to unite in favor of any one religious matter whatever.

Hence a conclusion against the above discourse and against all others that are like it by following fiction-items of wandering suggestiveness. Such deliverances are accounted ramblers hunting for topics as they go, and as wholly unfit for the sanctuary.

Answering this objection, I cheerfully admit the higher excellence of instruction interwoven with a tale that permits concentrated treatment of some single doctrinal or moral lesson; still, when parish

boys are addressed, no ban, seemingly, should be placed on the sermon so guided by its lighter partner as to look over the religious field here and there and never in the same direction twice. Clearly, soul-aiding information, thus presented, does not cease to be soul aiding because varied; for juvenile Christians can profitably hear elementary spiritual teaching on no matter what point.

And, as to incongruities, it will, assuredly, be time enough to condemn a religiously-toned effort as being out of keeping with the sanctuary when the effort is of a kind that might inflict a shock detrimental to spiritual welfare of those addressed. But here that misfortune can not occur. To budding minds the story, by merely "making good" as such, acquires eminent respectability; and, on leaning decidedly to the cause of salvation, becomes pious. Now it is quite impossible that young people should find it startling that various doctrinal matters be taken up accordingly as the turns of an eminently respectable and pious recital may suggest. The writer then would place the stamp of eligibility, not only on the foregoing pickpocket account, but on every other narrative in which most of the events lend themselves to the exposition of religious truth, even though each event do this in its own way and independently of the rest.

#### SECTION V—A "REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM" THAT FAILS

But it may be that contending voices are still heard. They perhaps urge that the defense now made would permit the preacher to spin even a lot

of short and more or less piously colored "yarns," each of them leading to treatment of some separate point of doctrine; an extreme which would fill the pulpit with something resembling the changeful monologue antics of the vaudeville stage. To sustain the denial here called for, it will be necessary to go a little deeper into the matter at issue and consider more precisely what dangers are to be feared from letting the various turns of fiction dictate the succession of doctrinal subjects.

One menace lies in the appearance that may thereby be given the speaker of openly confessing an inability to secure any hearing unless by keeping illustrative matter constantly in sight. No doubt such an appearance would be hurtful; the fact that the boys themselves could not fail to find it comical proves the educational harm sure to result. Nevertheless, this objectionable confession of weakness which was seen plainly enough in a varied collection of disconnected accounts linked with a corresponding variety of religious topics, can not be fairly attributed to the advocated way of doing. My natural, every-day proceeding of "telling a story," albeit a somewhat extended story, does not at all bespeak the open, unseemly dependence on fiction betrayed by the above exaggerated performance any more than a single, even though rather prolonged visit on some person ready to assist gives a caller the appearance of distress that would follow from recourse to several persons of the same helpful class.

A second danger to be apprehended from letting a number of higher subjects come and go under the escort of fiction is that the priest may thereby seem

to flit lightly from one religious lesson to another as if none were of much account. But here again the Story Instructor is in saving advantage over the scheme of "spinning yarns" separately and by the wholesale. Under the latter system doctrinal subjects were dismissed with an arbitrariness amounting to disrespect; *e.g.*, the preacher while treating of Catholic duty in the matter of shunning non-Catholic service would give no reason for dropping that topic in order to speak on prayer, nor for quitting prayer in order to picture the triumphs of the martyrs, and so on. But, while this shifting imitator of monologue reciters would certainly appear to make little of doctrinal lessons, the writer's instructor is cleared of all charge on that head. From start to finish he is plainly seen to account fully and dignifiedly for every change of subject; this the "Story Instructor" does by holding to a single, respectable narrative which when once begun is entitled to be heard to its finish; and which at certain turns happily suggests or, so to speak, demands the consideration of points of Catholic teaching.

While cheerfully conceding here as elsewhere that the methods of this volume can not suit the dispositions and circumstances of all co-workers, the writer closes the present subject with strong hope of having won a number of readers to the new plan for evangelizing parish boys. And such converts will be all the more in readiness for persevering effort when forewarned that their way of doing, as viewed by ordinary adult observers, will not contribute to the personal dignity of the preacher. The Story Instructor's work is that of inculcating elementary theology after a sort of kin-



dergarten fashion on followers still susceptible to some of the methods commonly applied to children. Now the long stride—from the clerical library to the kindergarten precincts—necessitated by this task is apostolic rather than naturally graceful, especially on the part of those wearing glasses or prematurely gray, and will be appreciated only by such as fully realize the nobility of the purpose in view.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

#### SECTION I—SUBMIT ABSENTEEISM INDIRECTLY TO PARENTAL AUTHORITY

LEAVING the question of securing regular presence at the altar to be treated further on, I would here suggest ways and means of more effectively bringing our young clients to their other religious events, the evening rallies.

It must, however, be premised that in large societies an absolutely full assembly can scarcely ever be realized; for, even when the members as a body are animated with a satisfactory spirit and are well prodded by a watchfully active management, sickness, night-work, incipient indifference, etc., are always interfering, and with noticeable results. Moreover, while an absolutely full gathering is practically out of the question, the fair total of attendance that can be had never comes for the mere asking. And let no one dream of becoming master of the situation simply by success in making his meetings somewhat attractive or at least non-burdensome; boys are forever so much under the spell of counter and greater attractions that only a ceaseless struggle with truancy can hold it fairly well in check.

Meanwhile, I am very far from allowing that this unavoidable tussle with neglectful membership is one that draws largely on the director's time.

To be sure non-attendance must be ordinarily dealt with by mailed notices sent over his own name, but, as a future passage will show, the work connected with such warnings (printed, of course) can be confided almost in its entirety to a boy assistant's care. Nor is this form of protest to necessarily find support in priestly calls at the homes of delinquents. On the contrary, frequent personal visits of the kind, even had one time to make them, would only be mistaken for complaining recourse to the parents and would thereby spoil the administration's needed policy of seeming to deal always with the members themselves independently of their family heads.

However, it should not be inferred from the foregoing remark that the writer lacks appreciation of parental influence on fidelity. Quite the reverse. He would gladly enlist the assistance of fathers and mothers at every juncture; only it seems unwise to have the appearance of soliciting their aid, for professed reliance on such support can not but give the organization a "Sunday-school" or "small-boy" tone which the older lads must resent.

Indeed, a laudable secret sense of dependence on home authority largely dictates the use of mailed notices concerning absence, which gain nearly all their efficacy by stirring the family elders to word and even action. For this reason the missives, while thoughtfully addressed to the boys themselves, should be inadvertently sent on postal cards or at least in unsealed envelopes. We can then be fairly confident that feminine curiosity, if no better motive, will lead the maternal domestic ruler to

examine into the real state of affairs; and when once the results of her observations have been imparted to the *paterfamilias*, the chances are that our young hopeful, becoming watchful of lurking pitfalls and misleading byways, will begin to find his path regularly to the church.

SECTION II—WARNING NOTICES; THIS, THE FIRST,  
MEETS A SPECIAL DIFFICULTY

The simpler way of issuing reprimands would be, of course, to use but one printed form for all cases of absence; however, by taxing his convenience to the very slight extent of holding three differently worded admonitions, the director is prepared to adapt reprimands exactly and far more effectively to the various phases of non-attendance sure to occur.

Thus, provision can be made for a difficulty arising from the attitude the priest will probably prefer to keep toward followers of sufficiently established regularity when they miss just one meeting and no more. He will hardly wish to treat such failures otherwise than as a father who trustfully foregoes the company of his children when, from time to time, they find, or think they find, some rather important reason for remaining away. This generous bearing seems advisable as it renders membership less onerous and rather inviting; while the opposite course of insisting that everybody must always be on hand, unless really unavoidably detained, darkens the sessions with a severe military tinge that can not but repel.

To be sure, a director committed to the liberal course here recommended need not hesitate to act

regarding new members who have missed their first meeting—a poor beginning always justifies investigation—neither will he find any inconsistency in correcting any old members absent two or more evenings in succession; but, when hitherto regular attendants have only once failed to appear, he feels that notices sent them, if of a fault-finding tone, will evidently clash with the somewhat free and easy plan of government already adopted. The spiritual guide, accordingly, spares this better class of offenders. But then new trouble arises; the reverend father, in common with other fathers whether reverend or not, has to learn that parental indulgence can be much abused.

No sooner is his attitude understood than the boys who think they are or ought to be of “sufficiently established regularity” begin, very commonly, to try experimentally for the limit of the irregularity which they feel themselves entitled to enjoy. In this way attendance suffers not a little, while many of the lads, receiving no timely remonstrance whatever, enter on the path of absolute neglect with suspension for its goal. For several years the author was painfully aware of the drain thus made on meetings, but, like many another organizer, worked along, enduring the abuse of his liberality, because, as it seemed, such abuse could be stayed by only the greater evil of exchanging the above considerate and inviting system for the exacting, odious one already described.

But on a happy day the following remedial scheme came to mind. It was to establish a peculiar rule for members absent lawfully, *i.e.*, from a single session and for “important reason.” This



regulation enjoins on every lad that when detained, even but once, he must immediately write to the director, not to apologize for absence—no fault being found—but merely to say “I will be present at the next meeting.” The only reason given the boys for putting them to this slight trouble is that the priest, enlightened by assurance thus obtained, is enabled to know who among the absentees retain interest in sodality affairs.

At this point students of juvenile nature may object that the common run of boys in their teens, finding presentable epistolary work to be real work, can never be brought by a mere society rule to communicate in writing with a priest. The objection is well taken, as appears indeed in the very instance now considered; for in the writer’s organization the above ordinance has never been kept by more than a small fraction of those concerned. “Why, then, make a rule that will never be observed?” Well, this regulation, having just been called peculiar, is already stamped as one that works in a novel way; in fact, it is among the very few products of human legislation that serve the intended purpose equally well whether observed or disobeyed.

The double-faced efficacy of my rule is easily explained. If an absentee keeps the ordinance and writes, his care in the matter shows interest and sufficiently guarantees attendance the next time; his case, then, can be considered satisfactorily closed. But when the missing one does not dip the pen, his failure to do so becomes the priest’s opportunity for mailing a notice calculated to bring the entire matter before parental eyes. Not that the spiritual

guide is now justified in reproaching his followers for having been absent ("lawfully," as we have seen, and "for some important reason"), but he may and does reprove on a wholly different head; namely that the offender, having been absent, has neglected to write. This reprimand, while making no complaint whatever of non-attendance, brings the fact of non-attendance none the less clearly before the domestic superintendent of mails and with fair prospects that sonny's "important reason" for missing the meeting will be replaced by an imperative motive for participating in all gatherings to come.

Here, then, is a solution for the difficulty of maintaining a liberal policy on the attendance question and at the same time safeguarding attendance itself. Before resorting to it the writer had always to be well pleased with evening rallies patronized by as many as sixty-five or seventy per cent. of the members; but, from the time parental action was enlisted in the way indicated, the average attendance has been ten or fifteen per cent. better than formerly. The postal credited with this good work of quietly transferring the enforcement of strict regularity from the sodality administration to that of the family reads as follows:

NOTICE NO. I

DEAR FRIEND:

At our last meeting you were marked absent, and I have not yet received from you the written statement that should be sent in such cases. It is to be hoped, however, that you will be present this week and that, if afterward absent at any time, you will at once write to me, as the rule requires.

SECTION III—WARNING NOTICES; THE FOLLOW-  
ING IS THE ONLY ONE THAT SEEMS STRICTLY  
INDISPENSABLE

Be it that the foregoing print is not in use or that the same has been employed without effect; in either case repeated absence soon necessitates a more pointed shaft; and yet the preparation of this shaft is not likely to be well accomplished off-hand.

While the new message must be toned to make a telling impression, neither it nor any other message should be so sharp as to hurt. Hence the disadvantage of presenting the accusation, naturally in the official mind, of wilful neglect. This charge nearly always causes friction,<sup>1</sup> for the reason that ground for the charge is but rarely conceded by the defendants.

Indeed the latter are able—more so in their teens than ever later—to create past attendance or excuse for past non-attendance pretty much at will. With them presence at a couple of sessions four or five weeks ago, is so stretched as to almost cover the pious occurrence of last evening, while the sickness or work that hindered their coming on a single occasion is magnified into an impediment lasting nearly an entire season.

<sup>1</sup>Allowance must always be made for the fact that by mistakes on the part of the officers undeserved reports of absence are very likely to be handed in. This difficulty is at its height in large organizations recruited in very populous centers where the boys are not thoroughly acquainted with one another. Accordingly, the author feels obliged to close all warning notices with the following words: "If (as is possible) you were present at the last meeting and were marked absent by mistake, please let me know at once."

These observations explain the director's present dilemma. On the one hand the missing member must be addressed in a decisive tone and without the least delay; for, as the absence habit is quickly formed and confirmed, absenteeism must be energetically attacked as soon as it has fully appeared. But on the other hand the priest feels the need of supplying a reason amply sufficient to justify his rather early threat of dismissal, and it is here that embarrassment begins. As we have seen, charges of wilful negligence (the only ground for suspension likely to be thought of), even if true in themselves will surely excite dissatisfaction, and yet there is absolute need of contriving some way or other an immediate declaration that seats must be either filled or forfeited.

As it seems to me, the very best, if not the only safe means of now warning in the required tone is through the maintenance of the Waiting List, a feature which for its other advantages has already been strongly recommended. The spiritual leader who has provided himself with this helpful institution is under no necessity of declaring, "your absence, being blameworthy, deserves dismissal"; but is able to gain his purpose, through the non-committal, matter-of-fact statement that absence, whether blameworthy or not, will force him to give unoccupied seats to the Waiting List boys known to be asking places. This position will rarely cause much feeling, for youngsters, no matter how much disposed to defend their neglect, are in almost every instance willing to admit that the seats of even guiltless non-arrivals can be justly given to aspirants awaiting turn to be enrolled.

Before "going to press" with an admonition dictated by these views, let me observe that printed remonstrances will be of wider service if so worded as to contain no enumeration of evenings missed. By indefiniteness on this point the one card is fitted for offenders in different degrees and also for repeated use on the same offender whenever such treatment seems called for. For the same reason there is disadvantage in giving any time limit at the end of which extreme action will be taken. Of course, however, the present protest (as well as the following one) must be such as will leave the disciplinarian wholly free to drop members at discretion. Following is the author's form for this postal:

#### NOTICE NO 2

DEAR FRIEND:

You are still marked absent from evening meetings; and, much as I wish to keep every lad who has once joined us, it looks as if your seat might have to be given to one of the boys on the Waiting List. Try, then, to be present at this week's meeting and afterward.

#### SECTION IV—BRINGING MATTERS TO A HEAD

While the two foregoing messages make provision for the great majority of incipient deserters they still fail of equipping the worker for dealing easily and effectively with the smaller but more troublesome element who may be termed "plausible" absentees.

These are for the most part wideawake chaps who take their evenings off with such regularity of



intermittency as to be rarely if ever successively absent twice, and who pose meanwhile as members of undeniable excellence. Let one of them receive the notice just described and he will compare its warning, not with his entire checkered record, but merely with the creditable close of his discreditable record. This process always enables the defendant to maintain that he has been away from only the very last session; for his regularity of intermittency keeps him habitually full of the fact that he did attend the meeting before the last. Another variety of the same plausible genus is formed by a number of the lads ever willing to write the director. These new offenders act under full assurance of ability to cover no matter what poor showing with prompt, repeated, and often elaborate instalments of paper and ink.

Now in order to cope conveniently with the alert spirits of the two above classes, we must drop the foregoing prints in favor of one worded directly against the plausible positions assumed. By roundly declaring the director's utter inability to tolerate frequent absentees of any category, this new remonstrance proves a "settler" for non-comers, whether of the intermittent kind or bent on covering their erring tracks with letter paper.

Besides undoing the wiles of an enterprising element in our societies, the missive now before us is qualified to serve a further purpose; making a decidedly emphatic assertion of the priest's attitude toward all notable absence, it can be advantageously mailed, as a formal and final admonition, to ap-

parently incorrigible delinquents of the ordinary type. For the better performance of this decisive errand, the notice, since it is to be served on boys, might be printed on cards of blue. For what with past actual or apprehended endurance of black-and-blue body marks—inflicted betimes by the “blues” themselves operating on and through troubled elders—juveniles of the oftener chastised sex come to regard the azure shade as portentous; hence closing administrative warnings, if appropriately draped therewith, are all the more impressively understood.

Concluding this section, I place before the reader my own version of the final protest.

### NOTICE NO. 3

DEAR FRIEND:

If a boy misses an evening meeting of the sodality only occasionally, and then sends me a postal, all is well. But when he is absent a great deal (even though it be on account of night-work, etc., and even though he send me postals), his seat must be given to a lad on the Waiting List.

During the past you have been absent too often; however, it is hoped that, after this warning, you will be able to attend well. Try then to be present this week and always afterward.

### SECTION V—SUSPENSIONS

Remonstrances made in the matter now before us can not prove effective unless ultimately sanctioned by forfeiture of membership. While there is no

occasion for enlarging on this evident impossibility, one may with propriety endeavor to indicate how the necessary sanction is best enforced.

A first consideration is the weakness of the widespread usage by which delinquents are dropped without being made definitely aware of the fact, and are afterward rehabilitated with nothing done on their part more than merely putting in a reappearance. This loose way of acting removes "fear of the law" by enabling truants to feel beforehand that they can probably conceal dismissal from their parents and that, anyway, they are going to retain entire freedom to fully repair dismissal at will. Accordingly, a formal process of dissolving and renewing partnerships is demanded in order that suspension may do its work effectively.

Besides, in any society worthy of the name, the same formal process is necessary to the proper operation of the society's mechanism. For wherever arrangements are such that the "outs" can, simply at their own initiative, resume former places without jarring the transaction of affairs, we may be sure that the aggregation is by no means organized in the degree essential to notable results in boys. There are, accordingly, the best of reasons for usually placing the sentence of exile in clear evidence by positive act of the director and in a special missive; the latter, like preceding messages, traveling in unsealed readiness for domestic inspection as soon as parted from the awe-stricken mail carrier's hand. And, when the suspended victims have returned contrite, let their welcome be by all means tempered with a repetition of some of the treatment given them at the first admission.

Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance that the present step be accompanied with all possible endeavor to spare the feelings of those disciplined. If the writer has found acceptance for the view that even warnings of coming dismissal should be wary in this respect, he will certainly be permitted the presentment that in dismissal itself allowance be yet more carefully made for youthful errancy of mental vision. There is real danger of a misfortune of magnitude when a youth departs disgruntled with his religious superior and constructively more or less indisposed to ecclesiastical persons and things in general. It were bad enough to lose the subject, but far worse when the mishap entails on himself a loss far outdoing perhaps all that his membership will have gained.

In the actual endeavor of softening extreme action I would first of all invoke again the ever helpful Waiting List. A priest enabled to point to candidates clamoring for unoccupied seats need accuse non-comers of nothing worse than inability to attend and is then free to behead them apologetically.

Another excellent plan is to avoid inflicting expulsion or even using its severe name; one enforces exclusion far more prudently under the milder form of suspension, and his confinement to the latter proceeding can be tactfully emphasized on dismissal blanks by a printed statement that the retiring member's future application for reinstatement will always be welcome.

When it is considered that the director may add to all this by some personal attention (*e.g.*, a writ-

ten line suggesting that attendance has become difficult owing to increase of age, residential distance, etc.), there is ample assurance, I trust, that delinquents can be effectively dislodged from the association without any sacrifice of the fruit gained with past labor—their good will.



## CHAPTER XXX

### THE FINANCIAL QUESTION:—ITS EDUCATIONAL AND DISCIPLINARY SIDE

#### SECTION I—DUES HELPFUL TO CATHOLIC TRAINING

THE author, having delved, earlier, into the economics of juvenile fraternities, is now much pleased to present the financial affairs as seen from higher viewpoints. This does not mean that anything is about to be said in favor of fines meted out for absence from meeting or even for neglect of dues. Boys rarely pay such fines, and the imposition of the latter consequently must always result disastrously in either administrative backdown or dismissal of offenders.

But, while there seems to be ground for usually discouraging punishments that lighten the purse, one may confidently advocate the establishment of regular dues, and this even for reasons quite apart from the material assistance to be thereby obtained. A fixed tax proves valuable as furnishing the superior with an excellent means both of training his members in an important Catholic duty and of knowing how to deal with them when their attendance is poor.

Accordingly, organizers seem actuated by short-sighted zeal when with the aim of securing the largest possible following they go to the extreme of abolishing dues altogether. In adopting this policy

good people seem to forget that if only for Christian educational results juniors should ever contribute something toward the maintenance of their union. Lessons on obedience to the Church commandment enjoining the material support of religion are a very important feature of early Catholic training, and consequently demand place in the curriculum of every juvenile pious society.

Moreover, it is a mistake to suppose that a slight tax, sufficient for the high purpose mentioned, will really interfere with wide membership. Workers who deal, as is here supposed, not exclusively with young castaways, but with parish boys in general, soon find that practically as many are obtainable under payment of small dues as under payment of none. Juvenile applicants do not hesitate to join because of petty contributions expected later; and, as a further section of this chapter will strive to show, they, without incurring any noticeable number of dismissals, can be afterward led to actually make such contributions.

## SECTION II—AN EASY BURDEN AND ITS HAPPY RESULTS

Assuming that the advantage of regular due-payments is admitted, we may inquire as to the figure at which these payments should be placed.

Decisions in this matter, while they will be given variously by different minds, must certainly be based on the data already furnished. Since Catholic education demands that some recurring offering be made and, on the other hand, the interests of the roll plead for light charges, the director

wisely exacts the lowest amount that suffices to command boyish respect. Now the tax of such respectability as will promote Catholic up-bringing and yet small enough to favor large society membership is, in the writer's opinion, something like fifty cents per annum, or what would amount to about five pennies at each payment, should monthly payments be required.

But this low contribution, while suitable to the higher interests of the members, is such that even when faithfully made by all it can fail to meet the total of expenses. Let me, then, freely repeat a confession already made, that the properly conducted boys' organization is one which, to some extent, charity may usually have to befriend.

Meanwhile, light dues prove helpful as a means of measuring earnestness of membership. The patron, when confronted by records of imperfect attendance, is often sorely puzzled to know whether his absentee-members have lost interest in the fraternity to such an extent that their names should be stricken from the roll. Naturally, one would wish to make all possible concession in favor of missing lads detained, perchance, by late working hours, night-school, or sickness, but, usually, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make inquiries by which the existence of such causes of absence may be ascertained.

Now the director, embarrassed by this situation, will find a simple reference to the treasurer's report his handiest and a fairly satisfactory way of classifying this dubious portion of his flock, and of separating its probable sheep from its probable goats. Even small "money," if released from

small purses, "talks"; and youngsters responding promptly to the sodality tax—though in other respects they appear to be of very uncertain loyalty—may be safely regarded as retaining a sufficient interest in sodality affairs. Parted, then, from the unfortunates huddled "on the left hand," these followers can be confidently preserved, at least for the time being, from the doom with which the others must be immediately overwhelmed.

### SECTION III—TITHES-GATHERING

But can dues, large enough to be respected by boys, be collected from boys? This question is raised incredulously, by a certain number of organizers reminiscent of failure in the attempt named.

While gladly returning an affirmative answer, the author does not undertake to minimize the difficulties with which our "tax-collector" is confronted. His first and very serious impediment lies in the dishonesty of many juveniles, who on receiving from their parents money payable to the society are disposed to appropriate the same for personal use. Indeed, very sadly must moralists note how readily pennies—yea, even pre-sanctified church-pennies—sometimes burn through a Christian pocket, when that pocket hangs in the pants of a boy in his teens. Add to this more than occasional delinquency the heedlessness chronic with the majority of early debtors, and the puzzle of collecting dues from one half of the members, without suspending the other half, stands out in bold relief.

The ordinary solution of this problem, which, like every one else, I have tried, is to prevent ac-

cumulation of arrears by establishing regular monthly payments. However, this plan, though always promising at the outset, usually ends by creating far more evil than it averts. Frequent attempts at gathering dues, while multiplying temptations to embezzlement, do not cure negligence effectually, and, in consequence, fail of placing the intended notable restraint on financial delinquency.

Moreover, this system indirectly antagonizes faithful attendance; for, out of real or pretended shame and in surprising numbers, juveniles shun meetings on finding themselves in arrears no matter how small; hence the more frequently members have to deal with a treasurer the oftener will they find excuse for truancy. Additional evils follow: the keeping of a necessarily exact account of monthly payments becomes really burdensome, and, worst of all, the worker who all the year round is superintending the payment of dues must, if he would sustain the rule, be perennially preaching the "gospel of money," which, on constant recurrence, proves nearly as hurtful to young congregations as to mature ones.

It then seems warranted to bid directors of unions holding a promiscuous throng of boys to think well before requiring payment, be it of only a nickel, as often as once a month. Whoever may attempt to gather dues after this fashion is liable to end by either making financial obligations a mere dead letter, or of upholding them at the cost of the society's very life.

In the writer's opinion and practice, the rule best adapted to the common run of juveniles, and therefore most easily enforced, establishes semi-annual



dues of twenty-five cents, payable in advance every fall and spring. While this policy is at some disadvantage by exacting the lump sum (?) of a quarter of a dollar, it seems on the whole worthy of preference because free from the greater drawbacks already mentioned as inseparable from smaller contributions made every month.

#### SECTION IV—MEETING THE CRISIS

As the simplest and most practical method of guiding the elusive coins' short but perilous passage from boyish hands into the treasury, and of registering payments made, I would by all means have dues gathered by envelope collections. In employing this system, provide, for each member, a small sized paper receptacle (preferably the article known to the trade as the coin envelope), the back of which will read as follows:

**. . . BOYS' SODALITY . . .**

**(Church and Town.)**

***Paid by*** .....

***Address*** ..... ***Pew*** .....

***Enclose (25 Cents) half yearly dues. SEAL, and  
hand to the Treasurer.***

The work of filling the above blank lines may better not be left to the members, who are too often

heedless individuals, not to say clumsy penmen; this writing should be done by the secretary, and before the envelopes are distributed.

The names and pew-numbers, previously placed on the receptacles, make it easy for the sodality officers during an evening meeting to pass the articles into the hands of those for whom they have been prepared; and afterward these same names and numbers facilitate the task of identifying contributions which, according to instructions, have been duly enclosed, sealed, and delivered to the treasurer.

In addition to the names and pew-numbers, the addresses may better be written. Juveniles, so sloppy in everything they do, can not be too forcibly made aware that, as regards financial shortcomings and long-goings, they are under close observation. Accordingly, let each receptacle for dues testify most explicitly that the management has its eye firmly fastened on him whose name the receptacle bears. Master John Smith is all the more likely to make prompt settlement of sodality obligations, when, glancing from the pew-number to the address, and from the address to the pew-number, he feels, in the depths of his pocket, that, of all this world of John Smiths, he is the particular John who is emphatically designated to square accounts.

A further convenience will be consulted by the same coupling of each address, from the beginning of proceedings, with its corresponding name. Kept thus at hand, the address is easily transferred to the outer (stamped) envelope which must enclose the due-envelope whenever a member, after ab-

sence from the evening meeting at which due-envelopes were distributed, is to receive his article by mail.

#### SECTION V—ENFORCING THE RULE

The money-gathering season when fairly on lasts during perhaps three or four successive weekly meetings. Endeavor during this period will be stimulated by a weighty consideration apart from the one created by an ever-thoroughly appetized treasury and apart from the other motives as yet presented.

Whoever would keep organized boys well in line must uphold every real law that is on the union's statute-book. To be sure, the leader prudently imposes but few strict obligations, sometimes seems not to discover that they are broken, and frequently sanctions them by a penalty no heavier than a disapproving word; but should he allow one genuine rule to be contemned, the other important regulations of his making must suffer in consequence. In order, then, that authority may be preserved, juveniles should never be allowed to feel that neglect of dues, if noticed, may pass without correction. Rather than let this idea prevail I would prefer to close unsatisfactory cases by writing offenders or, better still, by visiting their homes, in order with condemnatory clemency to cancel all obligations, while adding, of course, admonitions for future guidance.

But all endeavor to secure compliance with the financial rule should be made under the declared proviso that any lad unable, because of poverty or

no matter what other impediment, to meet the dues will, on simply making private explanation, be excused from payment. This generous position, emphasized every time the money-question is treated, helps young minds to perceive disinterested motives in their leader: and, while a necessary protection for the feelings of worthy but moneyless hearers, will rarely be abused by solvent boys.

Having thus shielded the innocent, let the worker, constantly urging upon his hearers the necessity of fulfilling present and future Catholic financial obligations, proceed, with much show of determination, against the wicked. A good expedient is to mail to each delinquent a second, and, if necessary, even additional due-envelopes, similar in all respects to the one he first received and accompanied perhaps with a short correctional circular.

The same as in other cases, any package prepared for the present purpose and delivered to the letter-carrier will all the better accomplish its mission if accidentally left unsealed, for, as has been explained in the chapter just preceding, this omission permits the contents to become by chance the object of Mother-Evelike curiosity and investigation under the guilty party's parental roof.

And, finally, the sword of suspension from membership may have to be used. If so, let it be wielded, as is done by humane State executives, with that maximum display of deadly purpose that usually insures a minimum of actual slaughter. Meanwhile, when occasionally some lad, otherwise of promise, is seen to be culpably in arrears, I would

not hesitate to save him by even appearing to have failed of noticing his fault.

To sum up:—I believe that the foregoing methods, applied to an organization burdened with our average heirloom of empty-handed youngsters and resolute backsliders, will prove effective in cash results on seventy-five or eighty-five per cent. of the members. And it is most encouraging that this outcome, satisfactory from educational and disciplinary viewpoints and helpful to financial support, can be obtained at a very small sacrifice of delinquent followers—indeed, the flock ought to bear its semi-annual shearing with loss of, at most, only two or three sheep.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### APOSTOLIC BOOKKEEPING

#### SECTION I—THE DEEDS AND OMISSIONS OF MEMBERSHIP RECORDED

ASSUREDLY no one will find fault if, in the title of the present chapter, a word borrowed from commercialism has been applied to religious use; the innovation merely emphasizes the fact that spiritual laborers must sometimes become accountants. To be sure these endeavorers, as such, are never concerned with merchandise and cash; nevertheless, they are now and then obliged to tally their neighbor's deeds, and consequently to join with secular workers in keeping books.

This need plainly arises in the undertaking before us. Creditable and conveniently maintained management of an organization blessed with a roll of any considerable length involves the maintenance of such records as will at a single glance always reveal any member's recent biography in the ranks; *i.e.*, his attendance at meetings and holy communion, together with his standing regarding dues. Usually the first of these items is the only one that creates any special difficulty; accordingly, I shall consider ways of registering presence at evening gatherings; promising, meanwhile, that with this much settled there will be no trouble in securing similar permanent reports of approaches to the altar and of financial affairs.

## SECTION II—ASSISTING THE MARKERS

Attendance at regular meeting being tallied as is here supposed by the officers, every effort should be made to facilitate and protect their work; for, not to mention the juvenile craze of doing things hurriedly and therefore imperfectly, our inspectors, at least in very popular centers, must often begin with the handicap of having no acquaintance whatever with more than a few of the lads in their keeping.

A first care in this matter will be to see that the recording books (one for each section), by their presentable make-up, as well as by the watchfully maintained neatness of their pages, are always such as to demand respectful, businesslike treatment. Accordingly, for the sake of appearances I would have these books sacredly preserved from the script of the official markers save for the single purpose of placing the signs, presumably the letters "P" or "L," to signify "present" or "late." Neither should the writing of these letters be permitted with the use of anything but a common pencil; quite often what has been done in the church must be corrected afterward, but changes made where ink or some other indelible substance has been used are not usually favorable to appearances.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I would not permit that even the letter "A," or whatever other stroke for non-attendance may be adopted, be placed while the meeting is in session. Let the regular marker simply leave for any absentee a blank space in which an "A" can be written after the gathering has been dismissed.

This course is preferable for the reason that when an absence mark has been written during the exercises, the supposed delinquent may enter late; in which contingency the book custodian always feels himself inspired to change the belied "A" into a tardily earned presence sign, but probably with

Apart from the foregoing, everything—names, addresses, and dates—should be inserted by a special assistant, who, since his writing is to be used in the church, ought to possess a clear, bold hand fit to cope with the “dim religious light,” which, especially when artificially supplied, is sometimes embarrassingly faint for even young eyes. Another precaution will be to have the patronymics of the members appear in advance of their Christian names. The officers using the pencil look to the family names alone, and if these be favorably placed for the inquiring eye will do the appointed work all the more swiftly and surely. Moreover, possibilities of confusion will be lessened by one who has care, when assigning places, not to let boys of the same last name sit together.

After all, however, our best hope of securing correct attendance reports lies in a rule strongly and repeatedly recommended on earlier pages. I mean the rule, helpful to the present purpose even more than to any other, of fixed pews for the members. Where this arrangement is maintained its full advantage is reaped by obliging the marker to stand at the entrance of each pew while taking tally of the same. In that position the officer can hardly make a blunder, for he sees at close range the faces of the six or eight boys of, *e.g.*, pew 30, whose names, grouped ready for comparison, are before him on the page written up for that particular row.

hieroglyphic results neither esthetic nor decipherable. And, apart from the necessity of avoiding the foregoing inconvenience, blank spaces for boys not present are desirable as permitting the director to afterward indicate by signs of his own such explanations as absentees may have sent or any other excusatory circumstances.

SECTION III—HANDY REFERENCE PAGES FOR THE  
BUSY PRIEST

While thus making every effort toward helping his aids to mark easily and correctly, the priest can at will have the attendance books kept in a way favorable for his own conveniently rapid inspection. This result will be obtained by causing all items concerning any given member to appear, without any turning of leaves, compactly on the same line and ready to be grasped at a *coup d'œil*. In order to make clear explanation of personal endeavor in this matter, the writer offers an exhibit taken from one of his own attendance books and now to be explained in detail.

As is shown by this reproduction of the record for pew 30, addresses are carried as well as names. On the left, immediately following these, are the marks for evening meetings. The marks on the right concern the monthly communion, of which later. At the top of the page and between the perpendicular lines stand figures for dates, from which we learn that the exhibited returns pertain to meetings held during the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth months of the year. To be more explicit, the sessions, having opened in September, were interrupted by a vacation begun in October and by a second vacation which followed the meeting of December 9th. However, the finish of the latter rest-period is now in sight; for, as we are informed by the combination 2/17, placed at the top of an unfilled space, gatherings are to be resumed on February 17th.

It may occasion surprise that while the meetings







are recorded in the ordinary way from left to right, the communions for the above months and occupying the opposite side of the book are marked, after Chinese fashion, from right to left. The departure, however, assures this convenience, that the two accounts (of meetings and of communions) shall, when synchronous, stand for ready observation side by side on the same page. The usual method, which with more respect for custom causes the communion tally to be kept from left to right, sacrifices the foregoing advantage by failing to adjust itself to the uncertainty of evening meetings; for the latter gatherings, being always liable to suspension, can not by any means be trusted to keep even pace with the associated sacred monthly feature destined to occur with unbroken regularity.

Further inspection of the tell-tale page shows how the same, while recording the absence of members, indicates also the subsequent action taken by the administration. We find that when the letter "A" (meaning absence) has been marked after the names of the four first youngsters, that letter has afterwards been penciled "1," "2," or "3." These numerals, placed by the director to guide his special helper, have served as the former's injunction on the latter that the missing lads should receive respectively the first, second, or third of the notices that are mailed to absentees.

Consideration of this arrangement will show that it presents the disciplinary side of each delinquent's career in such a way that "he who runs may read." Thus it appears that the first on the list, Master Fay, started well but afterward began to lose his way; twice he braved the first re-

minder—it is very gentle—but he yielded to the second, which is stronger, and reformed.

Daniel Guy's "baptismal innocence" lasted just one meeting longer than did William Fay's. However, from then on poor Dan betook himself, unfortunately, to devious ways, and after treatment with all of the society's rebukes (first, second, and third), was finally visited with suspension.

Our friend John Poe was of the especially troublesome "intermittent" category; but has been happily converted by the notice, No. 3, designed to meet such cases.

This favorable result is wanting to the next on the list, Master Joe Gill, also an "intermittent." Joseph resisted the grace with which his predecessor had co-operated, and consequently has been "cast out into exterior darkness."

The following youngster, Frank G. Dun, having been missing at the outset, sent in the postal required, a creditable act which is indicated by the penciled small letter "w." Afterward, however, the youth was twice absent without writing, but through some special reason such as will occasionally occur has received no reprimand.

In the next of our hopefuls, Paul Kip, we encounter an out and out "epistolary" member. Always elsewhere and always ready with written statements, he made sodality activity consist in correspondence rather than attendance, until notice No. 3, so drafted as to furnish an ultimatum under any and all circumstances, had entered its protest and threatened immediate final action. This warning produced a much-needed reformation.

Jim Lee, the seventh boy presented, has been

faithful since his first evening, which, for the benefit of the marker, had been indicated in advance with an arrow head. The marker, accustomed to the old names supported by their equal rows of recording letters, is liable to run past any new name unattended with such letters; and, consequently, can always be advisably guided by the precaution just taken.

Accordingly, the fresh recruit, Alfred W. Fry, is protected in the way just recommended; an arrow head gives notice that he is expected in pew 30 for the coming meeting of February 17th.

Attention is here directed to the small "x" traced after some of the names and on one of the perpendicular lines. The mark shows that payment of dues has been made and bears witness how easily, even if informally, that fact can be scored in close conjunction with the other items. To be sure, this offhand style of recording does nothing for the presentable appearances that have been advocated; nevertheless, it can be applied carefully a couple of times a year without creating any downright eyesore; and because of its helpfulness in other respects deserves to be tolerated.

In this matter informality is of distinct advantage in permitting financial standing to be indicated in desirable combination with the other marks without ever being understood—something that would be wholly undesirable—or even noticed by the young people using the books.

Where dues are collected by the envelope system of the preceding chapter, the material work of registering them becomes trifling. Receptacles that have been honored with returns are merely

arranged in the order of the pew numbers with which they are inscribed and are then checked on the attendance record close to names of their respective payers.

#### SECTION IV—ATTENDANCE AT HOLY COMMUNION REGISTERED

As has already been stated, the right of the diagram carries the communion records corresponding with the tallies of evening meetings just considered. The penciled "x" placed after some of the absence marks on the right, or communion side, of the book is the author's sign condemning delinquents to receive the single, rather infrequent, and very mild reprimand that he is accustomed to give for non-compliance with the rule concerning reception of the sacraments.

While we are on the present subject a word must be said concerning ways and means of securing for registration the names of all who kneel at the Holy Table. Should it happen that the members during their Communion Mass sit in the very pews occupied evenings, marks for approaching the altar will of course be placed according to the system used at meetings and by the same officers; but as parochial arrangements are almost invariably such as to displace our boy communicants from their evening benches, the names will, in nearly every instance, have to be obtained by another process. Commonly, then, the best plan probably is to pass among the members at the beginning of Mass cards printed to call for signatures and the numbers of the pews occupied evenings; as this last



piece of information suffices for identification and as writing during the Holy Sacrifice should be limited as much as possible, addresses are better omitted.

This method is much facilitated by the circumstance that many youngsters from being freehand crayon artists on week-days remain so in Sunday clothes, and thereby effect that an adequate supply of pencils scattered with sufficient evenness among the crowd is rarely if ever wanting. The cards, being handed to arrivals as they enter the church and collected while the congregation stands for the Credo, come and go almost unnoticed. Afterward the priest's special aid, having easily arranged the signatures in the order of the corresponding pew numbers, can in a few moments transfer the communion returns to the right of the attendance book, where they will remain permanently.

I am quite confident that the above simple method of recording sustains the claim advanced for it, of placing compendiously before the superior's eye full information concerning his followers, thus assuring him ready data whereon to commend or to "reprove, entreat, rebuke," and even dismiss, accordingly as the various showings of membership demand. Furthermore, a method such as the proposed can be maintained with light personal effort on the priest's part. As we have seen, the letters signifying attendance, "P" and "L," are written during the meetings by the officers, and the absence mark "A" can be supplied afterward by the director's special assistant. The latter will also easily trace the little crosses signifying settlements of dues. So the clergyman's part need not be more

than mere superintendence, plus the simple task of affixing, to the delinquency marks, such figures (1, 2, or 3 in the author's practice) as will indicate whatever warning notice he may be accustomed to have addressed and mailed.

While the presented record permits no alphabetical arrangement of names, it is none the less necessary that the person in charge shall be able to promptly reach the page telling of any particular individual; hence the attendance books will have to be supplemented with a directory giving the members alphabetically, each with his proper pew number added. To be sure this A-B-C guide would attain its essential object by giving the follower's name and pew number alone; but it may just as well carry the address also and will certainly prove an excellent means of recording the date of the lad's admission (necessary at election time), as well as his age.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>It will probably be difficult to find any "index book" answering the present purpose as well as the sparsely leaved article known in the trade simply as the "index." Usually twelve inches by seven and one-half, or a little larger, it provides a couple of pages for each of the twenty-four letters and without superfluous bulk offers sufficient space for the amount of matter just mentioned.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### POLITICS

#### SECTION I—BOY OFFICERS:—HOW THEY CAN PROVE HELPFUL

ELSEWHERE I have suggested, for a special class of societies anyway, the appointment of rather numerous aids raised above the ranks by only a single modest degree and sure to be of assistance in the aggregate; these minor dignitaries, always receiving their charges separately and privately from the priest alone, slip into place at any time without causing the slightest stir. However, no association can undertake to do without a higher group of public servants; they are the regular "officers," few in number but absolutely necessary for the management of affairs, and for that reason so conspicuously elevated above their fellows as not to be had without considerable ado over their selection.

Such assistance being indispensable for the primary task of keeping account of attendance at evening meetings, they may as well be called, after that distinctive occupation, "markers." As reasonably careful, observant lads engaged in this work can each do justice to about forty members, it is clear that the markers need not be many; an encouraging fact, for, since the director must keep closely in touch with his recording angels, he will consult convenience by reducing them to the minimum number consistent with perfect performance of their task.

The corps of name-takers ought to act under the supervision of a juvenile chief having general charge of the attendance books, and placed in readiness for substitute work in case any regular appointee should fail to appear. When large membership so demands, this office of general superintendence can be filled by two or three individuals, all of whom will be appropriately called secretaries; but these incumbents, raised to a plural number, will naturally include a magnate placed over his one or two associates and therefore installed as the director's supreme vicar. Let the "pick of the flock," in point of practical intelligence, fidelity, and experience, be assigned to the secretary department as it is here explained, and they can always be trusted to cope fairly well with extraneous details, leaving the spiritual guide comparatively free to care for the features of the evening that are peculiarly his own.

Strictly speaking, an organized set of aids such as the above, though planned for the special duty of marking attendance, could without numerical increase discharge all other functions of the meeting assignable to the boys; but, as the administration gains by multiplying such satellites as are easily followed in their revolutions or can do little harm by revolving amiss, a preferable plan is to permit additions to the official board—all of them under the control of the secretaries—for other and lesser services to be rendered. Consequently, I would find need of prayer leaders and of a couple or a quartette of "marshals," the latter having the police duty of enforcing an orderly exodus at the evening's close. A "treasurer" or two will perhaps

prove desirable; though if the views presented in one of my financial sections are accepted the "money gatherer" will hardly appear before his companions enough to find himself either of ornament or of use.

Obviously, the foregoing full corps of assistants, besides giving requisite attention to the mechanism of meetings, can become most helpful to discipline. For the development of efficiency in this respect, let the spiritual leader habitually express, both before the members and privately, full reliance on the officers as custodians of order; and as much as possible let him deal with any breaches of the peace through his aids, instead of acting directly on the transgressors themselves. Youths appreciative of their society and prominently placed before the public eye as the society's main supports acquire quite a keen sense of responsibility, crowned with willingness to make their authority felt.

The boys' leader, realizing how much assistance can be gained through well-disposed, competent subordinates, will naturally desire that in their selection certain considerations be applied. Clearly the officers should be chosen from among the oldest and most faithful of his following; they should remain as permanently as possible in positions become familiar with experience; and finally the aids, when obliged to relinquish their charges to new lieutenants, ought not to retire in a body, but successively. Direction of the juvenile society, like that of any other somewhat lively and puzzling industry, is likely to prove excessively difficult when it must be effected through assistant managers all or most of whom are "green."



Since these conditions should be consulted in the choice of helpers and in the determination of their tenure of office, the organizer is to be congratulated on the fact that he is entirely free to regulate the whole matter as is best. I would have the latter begin by reserving to himself power to appoint the one, two, or three secretaries just mentioned as having authority over all of their fellow officers. As these constitute the priest's chief supports it is desirable that they be just the lads of the entire fraternity on whom he can most confidently rely.

Further than this, however, let him not dare proceed by way of autocratic choice. It would be disastrous to disfranchise one's followers, for the "election" is among the best and most easily procured of our attractions. Indeed a non-voting body would be decidedly un-American and sure to fail in a land where every second individual or so is an actual or prospective bidder for the popular suffrage. But, if the spiritual father may not nullify his work by proscribing the ballot box, neither should the boys be allowed to invoke ruin by fanning political rivalry above its welcome degree of wholesome warmth into a withering white heat. Be warned by the fiasco of many a director who after holding a whirlwind election of officers to run his society has found himself with no society in particular to be run.

#### SECTION II—THE ELECTION; IT CAN BE MADE A SOURCE OF MODERATE, WHOLESOME EXCITEMENT

Let us now see how "campaigns" can be so conducted as to furnish some attractive stir without

creating the effect of tornado, blizzard, and earthquake combined.

It is to be hoped that my counsels in this matter will not be discredited by their failure to offer guidance for the very beginnings of organization; the new director starts as best he can, though probably his wiser course will be to personally make initial appointments for all posts, registering at the same time a promise that elections will be introduced later on. What I desire to suggest is that the first incumbents be installed to remain in power until the end of their membership and this with an understanding that all future voting shall be confined to the creation of an Appointment List of prospective officers destined to replace successively the actual ones accordingly as these will one by one resign.

To apply this system it will first of all be necessary to decide (perhaps by the criterion given below) what individuals are eligible for future dignities and consequently entitled to stand forth as candidates for early accession to the same. These parties must be determined in advance of the election for the reason that their names, printed in alphabetical order, will constitute the ballot on which each member is to mark a fixed number of crosses designating his favorites. After the vote has been cast and the count of crosses made, the candidates are placed in rank according to the number of suffrages received, "ties" being settled by lot. The formation of this expectant line completes the process, for the roll of "eligibles," thus rearranged by the *vox populi*, becomes our finished Appointment List; the priest gracefully placing himself un-

der constitutional obligation of accepting its names in their given sequence for positions on the board of officers just as vacancies will occur.

However, the foregoing plan for promotions into the administrative circle need not imply that each new helper must necessarily take the exact official post just relinquished. On the contrary, the organizer should always retain entire liberty to assign his assistants, old or new, to whatever charge may seem best. Much less should any agreement bind the director to accept as lieutenants those whom the actual call to honors may find making a poor showing in point of membership; rather he must reserve freedom to advance none but models of regularity; and freedom, therefore, to cancel all right of succession in claimants discredited by imperfect records in the society's books.

A moment's consideration gives assurance that "politics," toned down by the proposed measures, can not possibly create a warlike situation. The electors are not given the heated occupation of striving to hoist their friends immediately into command, but are called to the calmer endeavor of merely placing favorites well in line for promotion to occur in the course of time. Furthermore, existing incumbents are in no wise open to attack; they remain in power until ready to withdraw dignifiedly of their own accord and in deference to advancing years. This prospect eliminates what, after all, is the most potent cause of combustion; for among junior "state savers," the same as among senior, political excitement runs amuck less from getting the right persons in than from getting the wrong fellows out.

Indeed, it may be thought that a struggle in which only distant honors are to be gained and nobody can be badly mauled will fail of generating any real electioneering spirit attractive to the youthful crowd; but a fair trial will certainly confirm the writer's experience to the contrary. In default of a fierce fight the boys can do very well with a lesser one; accordingly emulation regarding place on the Appointment List, while never leading to excess, will always stir interest to a wholesome degree.

#### SECTION III—PREPARING THE BALLOT

It remains to answer a question naturally on the reader's lips:—"How does the writer propose forming the eligible list on which the members at large are to vote?"

I would have it made up, as always seems reasonable to our young friends, with the names of their more "venerable" associates. During the early developments of the organization these "oldest members" can be such in point of age simply, *e.g.*, all that are sixteen or over; but later on candidates should be the grayest of ancients in the sense of enjoying precedence in point of time on the fraternity's roll.

Let it be supposed, for example, that during 1908 preparations must be made for an election, and that the non-officers then longest in the ranks are found to have entered during January, 1904; such being the case, the eligible list or ballot for 1908 will present all of the boys who joined in January, 1904, plus recruits received during Febru-

ary, March, and April of the same year, and so on until the total of names will have reached whatever figure the leader is pleased to permit. It may be found desirable to present a considerable number of the flock to be thus voted into line for future positions. Something like one-tenth of the entire body can with propriety be accorded the honor, which, by the way, exerts no small influence toward binding each recipient more closely to the organization.

On opposite page will be found the form of ballot used by the author.

Reviewing the foregoing remarks, one notes with pleasure a most favorable additional result of the measures a director may naturally adopt toward making elections safely exciting; they accomplish the equally important purpose of establishing the board of officers under the exact conditions I have demanded at the outset in order that the board may prove truly helpful to the director himself. Coadjutors to be efficient must be attached and faithful; but such, and no others, can be acquired through the operation of a voting system that invariably elevates the oldest of the flock; for young people have not persevered notably in an association unless the same has proved congenial; neither will any thoroughgoing pious union have tolerated prolonged membership in those unmindful of rules.

Besides, by the proposed elective method, the utmost of official permanency possible under the circumstances is also assured. Aids are chosen to remain in position during the rest of their sodality days and then retire—not in a body, leaving all de-



# ***St. Aloysius' Sodality,***

***St. Ignatius' Church,***

***84th St. and Park Ave., New York.***

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***Election for places on the Appointment List,***

***Tuesday, October 15th, 1907.***

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## **CANDIDATES**

**(Enrolled in the Sodality during the latter half of the  
year 1903, or January, 1904.)**

.....Black, John T.           (Address)  
.....Gray, Peter                "  
.....Green, Matthew R.<sup>1</sup>       "

### **🗳 NOTICE TO THE VOTER 🗳**

You are not allowed to vote for more than three of the above candidates. If this rule should be broken, the ballot will not be counted. Mark a cross (X) before the name of each boy whom you favor.

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the names with addresses follow in alphabetical order.

partments at the mercy of inexperienced successors—but singly, each in turn relinquishing his place to the highest in line on the Appointment List.

Hence the conclusion that the boys' friend can admit the exercise of suffrage into his special field with all the welcome it merits in the outer world. Among juveniles, politics, if tactfully guided, can not fail of furnishing genuine attraction nor of creating "public servants" true to the name.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE SOCIETY'S COMMUNION SUNDAY

#### SECTION I—SUPPORTING ONE RULE BY MEANS OF ANOTHER

APPROPRIATELY occupying the place of honor in the procession of subjects, this chapter and the one immediately following outrank all that precedes; for they are devoted to our pre-eminently important work of promoting reception of the sacraments. And, leaving another field for this holy endeavor to be treated in the next and final group of pages, we must first of all consider the endeavor as applied to the enrolled members of societies. How, then, shall organized boys be led, in the largest numbers and with the highest obtainable regularity, to approach the altar worthily?

The undertaking demands, to begin with, that the members always receive an advance reminder of the appointed day. Meanwhile, since many of the lads are heedless of Sunday Mass deliverances, and many of their parents are equally heedless or perhaps absent from church, notification should not be limited to announcements from the altar.

Usually, of course, adequate heralding of the event may conveniently occur either verbally in meetings or in post-vacation circulars for the resumption of meetings; but, at times, certainly, prints prepared especially for the occasion prove

essential to excellent results. Thus, regardless of what may be done at other seasons, the latter form of advertisement must be employed through the long summer vacation, during which period, as I firmly believe, any established rule of receiving can and should be maintained—at least in most localities.

But, while it is a very simple matter to issue reminders for the society's Sunday, the further undertaking of fostering attendance thereon is the most delicate of our apostolate. My own efforts in this matter are made through a regulation in favor of monthly communion; the which regulation is purposely denied strict enforcement but nevertheless gains considerable strength in virtue of its abiding close companionship with a second and amply sanctioned precept. Our "rule" (as it is called) of approaching the altar is ever proclaimed as not really binding for every one of the twelve sacred occasions of the year; however, this modifying feature does not prevent the mandate from enabling the lawgiver to mildly require perfect regularity, and to require the same with such earnestness of expectation as to influence both boys and parents of the better-disposed class.

Meanwhile the "rule," operated as it is in close conjunction with an unremittingly vigilant, almost merciless, enforcement of attendance at evening meetings, avails through that partnership to bring numbers of less fervent Christians to the performance of a saving monthly act not positively enjoined. This happy outcome is easily explained. The director's resolutely exact enforcement of law in one department is so easily transferred by his in-

considerate charges to a closely allied second department that many a boy, after having been promptly "whipped into line" for evening meetings, immediately joins the "strict observance" regarding sacramental affairs and perseveres therein rather than run the slightest risk of again incurring the apostolic rod.

SECTION II—COMMUNICANTS WHO ARE SOMEWHAT NEGLECTFUL TO BE TOLERATED. INFLUENTIAL LEADERS FOR THE MOVEMENT EASILY FORMED

Question may be raised whether, in view of the success here chronicled, it would not be better to establish for the monthly communion as strict a rule as the one in force for evening gatherings; but reflection, I believe, justifies adherence to the more liberal policy just advanced. The foregoing half-meant item of legislation, especially when cared for by a priest seen to proceed with great firmness in a kindred matter, always exerts very satisfactory pressure without curtailing the allowance for human weakness that the present undertaking demands.

It is truly sad when a neglected youth can not achieve good standing in his society save by making, in real deed, a protest raised to the twelfth power against his family tradition of receiving holy communion once a year or less. Too often, for that matter, the poor fellow becomes something of a domestic confessor of the Faith by entering the confessional as much as three or four times yearly. There is, then, need of a policy yielding



enough to fully ratify the membership of spiritual unfortunates even when such membership fails of being fully sanctified in the special way desired. And here, be it remembered, encouraging treatment enables recipients to retain licit pride in their connection with the union and to recruit it with other lads of their own class. Moreover, spiritual weaklings are led by such treatment to kneel at the communion table at least occasionally; later, their visits there may be multiplied.

Meanwhile, encouraging feasibility attaches to the plan of exacting regular attendance at communion of the officers of the fraternity and of thus providing each of the sacred undertakings with a solid, dignified front. Indeed, I do not know of anything, looking to successful organization, that is more readily understood and accepted by those concerned than the necessity of good example in membership given the rank and file by those in authority.

And while this most valuable pious leadership may not always spontaneously assert itself in a satisfactory degree, be assured that nursing will soon place it in full evidence. My own educational watchfulness begins with the future lieutenant as soon as his nose appears on the Appointment List. If unmindful of admonitions, he is never advanced from our official halfway house to the gubernatorial halls; or, should promotion be merited, the closest of attention always awaits the new officer's possible slightest deviation from the indicated devout path. In fact, this positive attitude toward subordinate leaders of the organization is emphasized by the use of a special admonitory card taking ac-

count of any single absence from the altar on the part of those in high places.

SECTION III—"FACERE MISERICORDIAM MAGIS  
PLACET DOMINO QUAM VICTIMÆ"

As everybody of course would expect, the lesser frequentation expected of his plain members does not at all exempt the director from the necessity of dealing with many delinquents sure to fail even under the operation of a very lenient rule. These the busy worker must reach chiefly by means of printed matter which if prepared in accordance with the above gentle policy will be conveniently reduced to a single card noncommittal as to the number of absences, and running about as follows:

DEAR FRIEND:

It appears that you are not attending the monthly communions, which are of chief importance in the sodality. Next Sunday (third Sunday of the month, seven o'clock Mass) will be our communion day. Please be present if possible.

Here, as in warnings concerning evening meetings missed, a diplomatic indefiniteness regarding the amount of neglect permits the director to use the same tonic on all of his weaklings. However, with non-attendance at holy communion at issue, it would seem the safer course to forward notices only when there is well-grounded hope of securing amendment. For on the one hand, as I am about to plead, failure to respond should be very rarely treated as warranting drastic action; and on the other hand there is danger that boys will become some-

what hardened against the proposed pious practice if steadily peppered thereunto with priestly solicitations, all of which the boys are allowed to ignore.

And if circumspection should be had in simply coaxing members to the altar, it is assuredly demanded far more for the dismissal of those who can not be so coaxed. The extreme penalty is always something of a menace to the disciplined individual; if openly inflicted for the present cause, it may produce the very worst of results.

We are now intensely concerned with the fact that unreasonable characters who have been justly punished to the limit are often led by contrariness to stand afterward, and perhaps through life, against the very thing that was being enforced. That a boy dropped in connection with meetings follows the above feeling to the extent of renouncing them finally, matters comparatively little; but when the reception of the sacraments has become for our young friend the point at issue, his corresponding resolution can result far more seriously.

Besides, even though no resentment has been excited, disciplinary action in the matter now before us is always in danger of supplying careless individuals with what they can work into an "excuse" for indifference to prescribed religious practice. Poor human nature often abandons itself to neglect on the mere shadow of a reason; hence, the unhappy course often followed under the given circumstances by many a lad of unruffled feelings but of poor spiritual unbringing. On finding that the missing of holy communion has caused him to be "out with" the sodality, the youth argues that he must then be pretty much "out with" the Church.

Of course, had the same youngster (entirely free, as we suppose, from ill will) been similarly disciplined for neglect of evening meetings, it would never have entered his head to let ecclesiastical action in connection with those week-night affairs of secondary religious importance discredit his Catholic standing in his own eyes. But holy communion is the same whether received through mere sodality rule or in fulfilment of strict, solemn Easter duty; and our young friend, from being something of an outcast for failure to receive in accordance with the first of these obligations, is often of the unhappy discouraging view that he is too much of an outcast to receive in compliance with the greater law.

No doubt the present difficulty suggests a very mild form of suspension; thus the neglectful boy finds his name removed from the roll, but with assurance given that he will be fully reinstated immediately after participating in one or two of the society's communions. Meanwhile, absence from the altar should rarely if ever be ostensibly a fault requiring downright dismissal. If the delinquent still profits by the union's non-sacramental activities retirement will not be called for as profiting himself, and if necessary to the common good can nearly always rest on some reason less delicate than the present one.

Finally, should any lad have to be removed from the list for no other assignable fault than the neglect now considered, I would wish to proceed with full, clear personal explanations and much kindness, hoping thereby to make the measure so well understood in its motive and bearings as not to be sorely felt.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### FIRST COMMUNION FOR STREET BOYS

#### SECTION I—A FIELD FOR THE LAY FRIENDS OF YOUTH

FAITHFUL to the paramountly important purpose of promoting recourse to the sacraments, I now consistently relinquish the subject of fraternities altogether and devote my final chapter to the work, not necessarily connected with organizations, of aiding neglected lads to make their initial approach to the altar.

This, the final appeal, then, seeks assistance to be given non-communicant youngsters in their teens who can not be led to enter any parochial or regularly organized Sunday-school; for, owing largely to our great foreign Catholic influx and despite tireless pastoral labor, unfortunates of the kind have become very numerous in American towns. It will not be amiss if these victims of parental carelessness be spoken of as "street boys"; to be sure many of their number are above that classification; nevertheless, they are mostly youths who owing in part to lack of adequate home accommodations and, still more, to lack of home care, spend their free time chiefly in the public thoroughfares. A blessing indeed it will be if the hands guiding such to the altar can be strengthened and multiplied.

Since an increase of competent workers is in view, what follows is addressed less to brother priests and



other persons of sacred calling than to those of the zealous laity willing to exert themselves under pastoral direction. And here one may repeat the often-made remark, that Catholic seculars are somewhat slow to understand their power in behalf of their neighbors. Contemplating the temporal sacrifices, unstinted devotion, and resulting triumphs that attach to the priestly and religious states, excellent people of the ordinary paths of life easily believe themselves totally unfitted for any considerable effort toward succoring those in spiritual need.

Making labor thereunto begin with the vow of celibacy, if not that of poverty, they are much in the position of able-bodied war-time citizens who might consider the perfected organization and splendid capabilities of the regular army with the result of judging all volunteer co-operation to be useless and puerile. It is hoped that, in some instances anyway, this sentiment of false humility will yield to the considerations about to be presented; for I shall now endeavor to show that the street boys' first-communion class can be so conducted as to be found entirely feasible by multitudes of religiously-minded lay people, including especially many of the gentler sex.

## SECTION II—SMALL CLASSES BY ALL MEANS PREFERABLE

Since careless, more or less illiterate, and wholly undisciplined youngsters are now to be helped, there need be no surprise if the methods about to be proposed depart boldly from the instructional ways in ordinary use.

Thus my first recommendation is in favor of very small classes. Half a dozen scholars should usually be considered the maximum number. The quasi-family spirit resulting from this restriction stifles the spirit of mischief so natural to rude juveniles. Besides the smallness of the group thereby formed permits the teacher, seated in the center, to remain within actual touching distance of each of his auditors, and consequently to hold them in close attention.

Furthermore, the present plan of graduation is not the usual one of having all finish together—the class making its first communion in a body. Rather each member, as soon as sufficiently prepared, withdraws from the sessions and receives without awaiting his companions. Neither are the neglected lads of the neighborhood to be taken in distinct groups, one following the other. The maintenance of a single continuous class formed by members succeeding one another individually is entirely feasible. As the elementary instructions about to be described are such that a new arrival easily begins at any part of the course, “raw recruits” can be accepted and placed just as fast as first communions have been made.

The task of supplying material for operations becomes much reduced when we consider that the little school, if conducted along congenial lines (including, of course, some flavoring with small prizes), will in all probability receive many applicants furnished by its own past and present members. Boys are very exact accountants of one another's need of spiritual opportunities, and once pleased with membership in a class providing the

needed opportunities are almost sure to advertise things with such success as to make the class practically self-feeding.

And finally the rule of small parties of learners is again advisable as simplifying the matter of locating the sessions. Generally a mere handful of street lads can be instructed in some corner attached to the church; and for that matter are never so formidable as to forbid the hope of their being gathered, if necessary, in the home of a zealous lay patron.

### SECTION III—TEACHING BY WAY OF FRIENDLY CHAT

Passing to the question of effectively presenting instructional matter, we find that, since most of the beneficiaries, not to speak of their probable laziness, are unable to read well, if at all, there is good reason why catechisms and other prints—save whatever may prove needful regarding the prayers—should be dispensed with.

Assuredly, "faith by hearing" must of strict necessity be the rule for those who can not but find in any booklet a discouraging clog to proceedings. In fact, it may be confidently asserted that better attention is likely to follow when the teacher himself, wholly at ease in his matter, proceeds without printed guidance. Boys, the same as other mortals, listen *arrectis auribus* to the speaker full of his subject; but on the other hand they do not easily perceive any inspiring abundance of the subject in one who seems dependent on a book in order to know what comes next.

As is seen in this declaration of independence of the printed page, I am here no advocate of the home study (some trifling outlay on the prayers excepted) fostered in day-schools, but rather regard the same as a feature that would certainly drive our disciples away. If the average street boy is to learn enough religious truth for practical purposes, it will be by simply hearing the necessary modicum repeated over and over until the same is well lodged in his mind; for, while under proper treatment the creature can be induced to listen well on a few occasions; more he will not do.

Again, present circumstances would seem to forbid the rather stiff, businesslike air of proceeding exclusively, or even chiefly, by way of question and answer. Neither, on the other hand, can interrogations be wholly eschewed. Often enough they are necessary as a means of measuring the scholars' progress and still more frequently for the purpose of sustaining attention. The latter aim seems all the better attained if the teacher, in making repetitions, holds every part of his matter in readiness for either the indicative or the interrogative mood; so that, once a point of doctrine has been explained, the boys feel themselves always liable to be asked concerning it. Queries that thus hover in the air ever ready to swoop down on heedless auditors are most effective in keeping minds on the alert.

Meanwhile, the plan here unfolded does not prevent one from honoring the modest resources of the learners by usually shaping questions in such a way as to permit laconic replies. Indeed, especially with beginners, it may often be well to try for nothing more than the monosyllabic "yes" or the equally

brief "no" that boys preferably venture when talking on business and not for fun.

Now, if the teacher while following the course just outlined, encourages his young people to make themselves heard at will, not only by answering questions but also by proposing difficulties, the resulting instruction—which can hardly be considered catechism—becomes what the author prefers to call it, a simple friendly chat. There are, of course, chats and chats; this one takes from its supremely important subject a degree of dignity quite new to the word.

#### SECTION IV—SUITING LENGTH AND LANGUAGE TO THE BOYS

In determining the amount of matter to be taught the disciples here contemplated, we must of course be guided by the time space they will put at our disposal.

This, I think, may be calculated about as follows. Some thirty or forty minutes is as much of a weekly evening as the lively youngsters will easily spend apart from the gay city billows for uneventful repose in the theological dry dock; and two months or so of such sacrifice, or a total of eight sessions more or less, is all that can be ordinarily expected of their short-winded perseverance. Now the course of dogma must be trimmed down to admit of a sufficiency of repetitions in the given moments; in other words it must be so brief that, during some eight sittings each of the points presented will successively reappear often enough for familiarization by the hearers.



As will at once be understood, in thus counting on the entire feasible time limit (some two months of weekly chats), I am looking to those of the prospective first communicants who are most handicapped; fewer sessions, clearly, may answer for such lads as are better prepared by natural quickness or by some slight previous training.

The street boys' teacher, while unwilling to be excessive as to the amount of doctrine taught, must be equally careful not to overdo in his style of speech. Regarding this matter, readers are referred to the views of an earlier chapter in favor of treating the general gathering of parish boys with utter plainness of expression. And assuredly, if these views counted for anything when advanced regarding discourses delivered before the miscellaneous juvenile assembly, they apply with new force to oral effort on young scapegraces whose still scantier scholastic equipment quickens resentment of verbal liberties taken with their defenseless understandings.

Present exigencies, then, call for decisive action regarding even the received catechetical terms of considerable length—such as *supernatural*, *infallibility*, etc.—already viewed askance in my plea for the simple wording of instructions for societies. These expressions, which if used in a meeting demand explanation in easier language, seem now justly banned altogether. We are here engaged in a breathless enterprise that leaves the tutor no time for helping his undeveloped disciples to thoroughly master popularized theological terms, but forces him to economize by steadily repeating religious truth in whatever words are most perfectly under-

stood. Thus using the boys' own stumpy forms of speech you can sufficiently and permanently familiarize a young "tough" with the coming birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ during moments that had been practically wasted in any attempt to teach even the first of these mysteries by attuning the learner's understanding and memory to the single word, "Incarnation."

While using the simplest and plainest of language, the worker may well lean a little to realism by emphasizing connections existing between the higher subjects under treatment and familiar earthly things; for religious truth is all the better enabled to secure due place in youthful minds when it is found linked with the material world about us. Thus a better impression will be made by directing the class to such matter-of-fact items as the number of years that have elapsed since Christ was born; the apostles' names used in the boys' own family circles; the name of the bishop of the diocese, etc., etc.

Further aid of the kind is available through the employment of pictures illustrating the divine mysteries, the lives or martyrdoms of the apostles, and the like. But the most helpful of all material accessories are likely to be a tin chalice and ciborium together with pasteboard wafers, large and small, to be used in furnishing a vivid and never to be forgotten representation of what occurs at the altar during Mass.

#### SECTION V—APOSTOLICITY A CENTRAL FEATURE

When untutored minds are to be evangelized by means of a few brief lessons it is all important, of

course, to present the religious truths in whatever order and with whatever relative prominence will enable them to be best retained. As regards the first of these needs, no doctrinal sequence assuredly can be preferred to that of the Apostles' Creed. However, on turning to the second of the above aims, one may find himself justified in altering the same Creed's division of honors among the doctrines. This departure I would chiefly make by placing most conspicuously in the advance foreground the tenet of apostolicity, which (was it through the humility of the divinely favored fishermen?) does not explicitly appear at all in the apostles' own reputed symbol.

A reason for the preferred course is easily given. The preparation, mission, triumph, and martyrdom of the chosen twelve make an account of great natural interest which can be helpfully turned to the advantage of allied explanations concerning the Church's authority to teach and rule in place of Christ and to minister for Him the sacraments He instituted. My plan is to have the naturally engaging presentation of apostolicity fix attention on other doctrines of first importance much as the attractive leading feature of a picture quickens perception of the picture's less noticeable details.

A moment's consideration shows that under present circumstances the particular tenets just named as needing assistance can truly gain by receiving it. The street boy's mind, as found by the instructor, is often a blank concerning these matters. As regards ecclesiastical teaching power the lad believes the Church to be right—right, that is, up to date;

for all the lad can say she is liable to go wrong to-morrow; while on the other points above mentioned—the authority of the Church to rule and her position in sacramental affairs—he really knows next to nothing. Now, since these hitherto unbrokeh doctrines can be repeated to the youth only a few times, and since he adds more or less present indifference to more or less past inexperience, it is difficult to give him any true mental hold on the doctrines concerned; such a hold I mean as will enable the youth to realize for life that Christ Himself lives in His Church and commands attendance at Sunday Mass; that Christ Himself is personally present in the Holy Eucharist and is personally the author of the other sacraments.

In urging that this drawback on the part of street-boy auditors calls for the use of a particular and providentially sufficient object-lesson, I am merely applying a method in growing favor with catechists and of common use in other departments of schooling. If, for example, a teacher must impress on a backward child that Columbus gave us America, the teacher can accomplish the task no better than by summarizing the thrilling narrative of the discoverer's great seagoing exploit, thus securing for the fact of Columbus' benefaction, not merely some sort of a hearing, but that earnest, thoughtful advertence by which the memory is put to its best.

Now, in our special religious field, the author would have the same way of doing. It being necessary to inculcate on spiritually backward young people that Jesus Christ gives us His own truth, His commands, and His sacraments through His priest-

hood, why not ingratiate and vivify the presentation of this body of doctrine by constantly offering it as part of the picture replete with natural interest which portrays Jesus Christ establishing His wonderful priesthood in the chosen twelve?

Hence, finally, the suggestion made by way of practical conclusion that the instructor, while treating of the establishment of the Church, will place the apostles in the boldest possible relief by recounting the striking facts of their early weakness, later deeds, and heroic deaths; and that throughout following explanations on other doctrinal points, he will refer at every opportunity to the sainted pioneer band, thus making it the helpful central feature of much that is presented.

#### SECTION VI—THE WRITER SUBMITS A “FIRST COMMUNION CHAT” FORMED ON THE ABOVE IDEAS

A practical application of the foregoing views is placed in the following appendix. There readers who may be interested will find a “chat” which, with due repetition in each case, has enabled the author during a goodly number of years to rapidly prepare many a neglected lad for the altar.

However, it must not be thought that what appears below is proposed as something to be followed *ad literam*. On the contrary, one, while asking consideration of the general plan just advocated, is naturally alive to the advantage of respecting individualism in workers, and consequently desirous of having each teacher state things in the teacher’s own way.



Meanwhile, the appended "First Communion Chat" may encourage some by displaying the author's unswerving loyalty to his convictions, especially as regards the use of simple language. In fact, the latter policy is followed even to the employment of a few words so foreign to ordinary religious phraseology as to need some sort of an apology for each and every infliction on adult ears. These expressions will be found fenced in with parentheses serving as reminders of the plea that what seems, to us of superior advantages, most incongruous is wholly in place for rough, untaught boys.

Confessedly the coming "chat" is named such with lesser exactitude, for it presents only the teacher's side of the conversation without attempting to reproduce any answers or questions on his disciples' part. However, the routine replies of the scholars are, of course, obvious, while their original verbal contributions will be sampled quickly enough by those undertaking the good work recommended.

Of course, the matter about to be submitted can always be interrupted at any point and "continued in our next"; but the entire exposition just as printed has been found to occupy not more than two evening sessions of the short duration stated above.

#### SECTION VII—DOCTRINAL MATTER TO SOMETIMES UNDERGO FURTHER REDUCTION

Finally, while the following instructional matter is not at all bulky, it should without hesitation be freely shortened to suit boys handicapped by stupidity or more than usual inconstancy.

In this connection we must deprecate the mistake often made by lay workers who imagine that nobody can receive holy communion profitably until after acquiring what good Catholics would consider a fair amount of catechetical knowledge. On the contrary, let a Christian know there is one God who rewards and punishes; that in God there are three persons, the second of whom has become man; that this God-man—Jesus Christ—having established the infallible Catholic Church, has given its priests power to forgive all sins confessed with true sorrow, and our Christian has already completed such remote mental preparation as is absolutely necessary in order to kneel at the Holy Table with at least some spiritual gain.

To be sure, there still remains a requirement, placed by ecclesiastical authority, that the recipient shall realize Our Lord's divinely effected presence in the Blessed Sacrament. But, while teachers conscientiously aim at the fulfilment of this precept, they should do so with a clear understanding of the precept's bearings. Obedient effort will, then, be greatly aided by the encouraging, inspiring remembrance, that here ecclesiastical authority itself wishes favor to be shown in doubtful cases where improvement is hopeless; and that even downright (though, of course, unintentional) failure to impart the foregoing prescribed item of religious knowledge does not, after all, nullify results.

Let the instructors concerned find reassurance in the truth, that if spiritually-qualified persons be accidentally permitted to approach the altar with only the slight preparation I have first supposed, such

persons profit by their approach even though in ignorance as to what the Bread of the Altar really is. This consoling state of the case is brought home to us when we reflect that the Church, through her ancient discipline, permitted infants to partake of the Heavenly Banquet.

Meanwhile, the considerations here advanced by no means imply that all young people should be hurried to the altar on scant preparatory mental training. In parochial schools, and usually in Sunday-schools, the small total of religious information just presented is not to be accepted as qualifying candidates for the Holy Table but must be made to grow; this in order that the Divine Visitor may be more fittingly and fruitfully received. Nevertheless, the same limited total of religious information, should there be no means of making it grow, will surely suffice.

Consequently, the street boys' friend need not feel burdened with excessive responsibility if requested by the pastor to decide whether some particular boy shall be permitted to kneel at the altar. An affirmative decision, if then rendered, by no means affirms that the lad in question has "fair knowledge" of his religion, but merely that all circumstances considered, the lad's stock of religious knowledge—which of course amounts at least to the entire minimum just explained—can not be enlarged.

Attention, then, to the efficacy of rudimentary catechetical training amply supports the foregoing position that we may laudably make ready for backward and very uncertain youngsters by preparing lessons fewer and shorter than even the few brief

ones the writer has to offer. Indeed the latter, willingly leading in the process of curtailment, expressly indicates the parts of his "chat" to be first sacrificed in behalf of slow or especially fickle subjects. These passages will be known by the fact that they are printed in smaller type.

## APPENDIX

### A FIRST COMMUNION CHAT

#### SECTION I—THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

OUR holy religion begins with the truth that in God there are three divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup>

Are there then three Gods?

We state the truth that there is but one God every time we make the Sign of the Cross. For why do we say "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and why do we not say in the names of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost?

Which of the three divine persons came into this world and died on the cross for our sins, God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost?

The truth that God the Son died on the cross for our sins is also stated every time we make the Sign of the Cross. To understand this well you must know that long ago, when people wanted to kill a person, they used to make a wooden cross and to that they used to fasten the person whose life was to be taken. Now, in making the Sign of the Cross, we make what seems some way like the wooden cross, for the long movement from head to breast

<sup>1</sup>As the reader will kindly recall, statement has been made that each and every part of this instruction should be put interrogatively whenever the advancement of the learners may so demand.



shows like the long beam, and the short movement from one shoulder to the other shows like the cross-piece.

In making the Sign of the Cross, then, we mean, firstly, that there is one God in three divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and, furthermore, we mean that one of the divine Persons—God the Son—came into the world and died on the cross for our sins.

## SECTION II—GOD THE FATHER

God the Father made all things—heaven, earth, and ourselves. He made the first man and woman. What were their names?

Adam and Eve committed a sin that did us great harm. What do you call that sin?

(As the word “original” always proves a “poser,” the boys should be drilled in its pronunciation. They may remember the word all the better when shown that the sin here spoken of receives its name from having been committed at the origin or beginning of the human race.)

You may be wondering how Adam and Eve fell into original sin. They did so by disobeying God and eating fruit from a tree which He had commanded them to leave alone.

So the sin called original sin was not committed by any of us now in this room, nor by any persons now living. It was committed by just Adam and Eve alone. But do we all come from Adam and Eve? Are we, then, born with the stain of this sin on our souls? How are we made free from that stain?

## SECTION III—GOD THE SON

By what name was God the Son known when He was in this world? When God the Son came into this world did He come a full-grown man or a little baby? On what day was He born?

Christmas Day is, then, Jesus Christ's birthday. What boy in the class has his birthday nearest to Our Lord's birthday?

We are now in the year 1908. However, that does not mean that there have already been just 1907 years, making this year the 1908th. We make the present year 1908 for another reason—because it is now 1908 years since Jesus Christ was born. To be sure the world was thousands of years old when Christ came into it; but His coming into the world was such a great thing that we count time from that coming.

Since Jesus Christ came into the world like the rest of us, a little baby, He had a mother. Who was His mother? There was a holy man who lived with the Blessed Virgin and the child Jesus, and was thought to be the father of Jesus. Who was that holy man?

Jesus Christ while a boy and a young man worked with St. Joseph at their trade, for they were carpenters.

After St. Joseph died Our Lord earned in the same way a living for Himself and His mother, the Blessed Virgin. This went on until He was thirty years of age, then He began to preach.

To what people did Jesus Christ preach? Was He a Jew?

We must not think that it was in any way against Our Lord that He was a Jew. In those times the Jews, while not so wonderfully good, were at least the best people going and they remained the best people in the world until they turned against Jesus Christ.

After Our Lord had been preaching among them for three years, the Jews became angered against Him and took His life.

On what day did they take Our Lord's life? How did they take His life; was it by starving Him, stabbing Him, or what?

The Stations of the Cross show things that really happened when Our Lord was going to be put to death on the Cross. He really fell three times on the way, met His blessed mother, etc. The spots on which these things took place are still known and to be seen in the city in which Our Lord died. (The learners might all be taken into the church in order to consider the passion as represented by the Stations.)

When Jesus was dead His body was laid in a cave. The Jews then took a great stone, such as we have on the sidewalks, and putting it up, they closed the mouth of the cave. Not satisfied with this, they placed soldiers to guard the spot.

Can any boy tell why it was that the Jews made such a fuss over Our Lord's dead body?

Here is the reason. Jesus Christ had promised that after being dead He would come to life again on the third day. Now the Jews wanted to make out before everybody that His promise was a lie. Their idea then was to hold on to the dead body for three days and afterward to show it to all of the people. They

could then say to the people, "He told you He would come to life, but He is still dead, so He lied."

Now for this purpose soldiers were put to watch at the cave Friday, that was the first day; and all day Saturday, that was the second day, and Sunday, that was the third day; but early on the morning of that third day Our Lord came to life, just as He had said He would.

On what Sunday, it being the third day after He had died, did Jesus Christ come to life?

(If "Easter eggs" are known in the locality, the boys will here be aided by a reminder that the Sunday on which Our Lord came to life is the one called Easter, that people celebrate with the use of colored eggs.)

When Jesus Christ had come to life He at once visited His great friends, the apostles.

Our Lord had twelve of these great friends. The apostles' names most commonly heard are Peter, Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, Philip, Bartholomew, and Matthew. Most boys are named after the apostles. How many of the class are so named?

Did Jesus Christ pick out these men to build up His Church? You may be greatly surprised to know that the apostles were the last persons we would think of for the work of building up the great Catholic Church in all parts of the world. They were nothing but poor fishermen, without brains, courage, money, or friends. They didn't know anything—couldn't even read or write.

You will be still more surprised, perhaps, on learning that it was just because these men were "no good" that Our Lord picked them out to build

up His Church. Let us see His reason for such a choice. By having only such weak, helpless persons as these at the work, Christ made it clear that His great Church has been placed in the world really by His own divine power and not at all by the power of men.

During the three years that Our Lord Jesus Christ went about preaching, the apostles were always with Him hearing everything He said, and seeing everything He did. After He had died and come to life, He returned to them and stayed with them for forty days. At the end of that time, He took the apostles upon a high hill and there they saw Him rise from this earth into the clouds and so He went up into heaven.

On what day did Christ go up into heaven?

Perhaps there are some here who do not remember what "ascension" means. But you all know what a balloon ascension is. It is a balloon going up. Now Ascension Thursday is the day on which Jesus Christ went up into heaven.

#### SECTION IV—GOD THE HOLY GHOST

There are three persons in God: God the Father, who made us; God the Son, who died on the cross for us; and God the Holy Ghost. After Jesus Christ had gone up into heaven, He sent the Holy Ghost into the world. The Holy Ghost came into the world in order to help the poor apostles so that they would be able to build up the great Catholic Church. He came also to take care of the Catholic Church for all time, and, besides, to help us all save our souls.



As the Holy Ghost came first of all to help the apostles build up the Church, they were the first persons that He visited. On what day did the Holy Ghost come down on the apostles?

You must know that at the time Jesus Christ suffered, the apostles were great cowards. When they saw the Jews gather around Our Lord and seize Him to crucify Him, they ran away so as to save themselves. Afterward, when He had been put to death they were more frightened than ever.

It is easy to see why they were in such fear. The apostles had been Christ's great friends and on that account were afraid that the Jews, after taking His life, would take theirs, too. So, after Christ had died, these twelve friends of His didn't dare to even let themselves be seen, but got off to a lonely place, hid themselves from everybody and remained hiding until the Holy Ghost came upon them.

After the Holy Ghost had come upon the apostles were they still afraid?

One of the ways in which the Holy Ghost helped the apostles was that He changed them from being cowardly men into men who feared nothing. So, after receiving the Holy Ghost, the apostles went right out into the streets and told the crowds how Christ was God, how He had come to life, and had gone up into heaven.

At that time only a little handful of people believed in Christ, but the apostles made known how everybody had to believe in Him; and how they themselves, Christ's twelve great friends, had been picked out by Our Lord to build up His Church. Did the apostles then preach these same things everywhere?

People of the different countries listened to the preachers and joined Christ's Church and in that way the Church was built up in all parts of the world.

Did the apostles do all this without anything painful happening to themselves?

The bad people who would not believe in Christ made Christ's twelve great friends suffer very much; but, as you have seen, the Holy Ghost had given the apostles courage to bear for their religion anything at all—even death itself. And, helped this way by the Holy Ghost, these very men who had been so cowardly did die for their religion; as did also crowds bigger than you could count of men, women, and children that the apostles had brought into the Church.

Now you couldn't forget the apostles' names if you tried, for they are borne by yourselves or at least by plenty of your relatives and friends. And, since you can not forget their names, it will be easy to remember how the different apostles died. So, all of you, and especially our friend here, Pete ———, will keep in mind that St. Peter, whom Christ made the leader of the apostles and the first pope, was crucified like Our Lord, only that St. Peter persuaded those who were putting him to death to let him die with his head downward; for he felt that he was not fit to die exactly the same way as Our Lord.

(Similarly, interest can be directed to the modes of death inflicted on other apostles, as follows: St. Paul, beheaded with the sword; St. Andrew, crucified; St. Philip, crucified and stoned; St. James the less thrown from a high place and brained; St.

Thomas, speared through the body; St. Matthew, martyred at the altar while saying Mass; St. Bartholomew, skinned alive.)

SECTION V—THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Were the apostles bishops?

Our Lord Himself made them bishops; and as the Church began with the apostles, they were the first bishops of all.

Did Our Lord give the apostles power to make other men be bishops? Power to make other men be priests? When the apostles died did they leave bishops and priests after them?

And so it is straight from the apostles that we have bishops and priests to-day.

Who are the real teachers and rulers of the Church, the bishops or the priests?

The priests are not the real teachers and rulers of the Church but merely helpers of the real teachers and rulers, who are the bishops. Since the bishops all over the world have been put by the apostles themselves in place of the apostles, the bishops have the same power to teach the Church and to command it that the apostles received from Jesus Christ.

Could one find any part of the world with no bishop in charge of it?

The places a bishop has charge of make up what is called a diocese. (At this point most street boys will gain by being told the name of their bishop and of his episcopal city, and by getting some idea of the limits of his diocese.)

What do we call that church which is the bishop's own church?

The cathedral does not get its name because it is the largest church. If the bishop should go and live in the smallest church in the diocese, that would be the cathedral.

There is one bishop who is over all the other bishops; what is he called? Where does he live?

(The curiosity of the scholars can be stirred up to account for the fact that the present Holy Father is not Pius the ninth, nor Pius the eleventh, but Pius the tenth. Explain the papal custom of taking a new name at election.)

From what has been said we clearly see how the Catholic Church holds together. In it are, to begin with, the peoples of all nations under the care of the priests. But all of the peoples and priests are under the care of the bishops; and the bishops of the whole world, having been put by Christ's own apostles in the place of the apostles, have the apostles own power to teach Christ's truth and to command in Christ's name. And, finally, all of the peoples, and priests, and bishops are under the care of the chief bishop, the Pope, who is the head of the Church and in place of Jesus Christ Himself.

#### SECTION VI—THE SACRAMENTS

One of the great things to be said of the bishops and priests is that they have received from the apostles the office that Jesus Christ gave the apostles of administering (looking after) the sacraments.

Here I must tell you what a sacrament is. It is something instituted (made, or given to us) by Jesus Christ to give grace, that is God's blessing and help, to the soul.

So the sacraments are very different from other things seen in the Church, the which other things were not instituted by Our Lord but by the bishops, priests, or people. Is the sprinkling of holy water a sacrament? The lighting of holy candles?

These doings were instituted, not by Jesus Christ, but by the bishops, priests, or people. The same is to be said of the blessing of throats, wearing of medals or scapulars, and in fact of most of our religious doings. Our Lord instituted just the sacraments—seven of them—which He placed in the care of the apostles and, through the apostles, in the care of the bishops and priests.

We know that what has just been said about the sacraments is true, because it is taught all over the world by the bishops of the Catholic Church.

Have the bishops been put by the apostles themselves in place of the apostles?

It follows, then, that the bishops have received from the apostles the power that the apostles received from Christ Himself to teach His truth.

We shall now speak in particular of the three sacraments to which you should give most attention: Penance, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation.

#### SECTION VII—CONFESSION

Confession to a priest is a sacrament, for it was instituted (made, or given to us) by our Lord Jesus Christ and through it He gives to the soul His grace or blessing by which sin is forgiven.

When we go to confession does the priest forgive our sins by his own power?



Neither does the fireman put out the fire by his own power. He puts it out by the power of the fire engine. All the same by turning the engine's stream on the burning house the fireman really drives the flames away. But, in like manner the priest, by turning the stream of Christ's mercy on the soul, really washes the sins away.

Should the question be put: "How does the priest come to have Christ's power to forgive sin?" we must be ready to answer as follows: The priest receives this power from the bishop, the bishops having received the same from the twelve apostles; for, as the bishops have been put by the apostles themselves in place of the apostles, the bishops have the power that the apostles received from Christ.

When we go to confession and are in mortal sin, are we bound to tell each mortal sin? Are we bound to tell as nearly as possible, the number of times each mortal sin has been committed?

When we go to confession it is well to tell our venial sins also. But now we must see the difference between mortal sins and venial sins. The first are grave (big) sins that send the soul to hell; the second are lesser sins that send the soul to purgatory.

Can it be that any soul will ever get out of hell? Can it be that any soul will have to remain forever in purgatory?

Let us now suppose that a person going to confession remembers some mortal sin, but makes up his mind not to tell it. Such a person, instead of being forgiven, only commits a new sin of the worst kind. This he does by insulting a sacrament which Jesus Christ has given us through His apostles, bishops, and priests.

Suppose one who goes to confession has a mortal sin on his soul and forgets to tell it, will he be forgiven?

Confession, then, is very easy. If you forget to tell your sins they are forgiven just the same, as long as you want to tell them and try to think of them.

If we forget a mortal sin, must we tell it the next time?

The sin is already forgiven but, all the same, God commands us to tell it the next time we go.

In order to be forgiven, do we have to be sorry for our sins?

There are two ways of being sorry for our sins. The first way is when I am sorry because I have displeased God who will punish me; the second is when I am sorry because I have displeased God who is so good. Now which is the better way of being sorry, the first or the second?

The answer to this question is easily seen in other matters. For example, two brothers have smashed some of the things about their home. One of these boys is sorry for the act because he is going to be punished; the other boy is sorry for the act because he has displeased his father, who is so good. Clearly the second boy has nobler sorrow than the first. Now, in confession I must do at least as well as the first of these lads; I must at least be sorry for having displeased God who will punish me and send me to hell, and I will do much better if I am also sorry for having displeased God, who is so good.

When a person is sorry for his sins because they displease God, who is so good, the person's sins are at once forgiven without his going to confession. How-

ever, when anybody has his sins forgiven this way, he is obliged to tell the same sins the next time his confession is made.

(Picture instances of mortal sin committed and of life endangered and show how the persons concerned can instantly make their peace with God.)

In order to be forgiven in confession, must we have our minds made up that, with God's help, we will not sin again?

If one says, "I am sorry for the past sins, but I am going to sin over again," he is not really sorry for his sins but only pretending to be sorry.

In order to have real sorrow for our sins, do we have to feel like crying?

The real sorrow we must have for our sins is merely a wish that we had not sinned; our minds, meanwhile, being made up that with God's help we will not sin again.

The priest gives a penance; is one bound to attend to it?

The penance is a punishment that we take from the priest for our sins. It is most always some prayer to be said. One commits a sin if he puts off the doing of the penance very long; and he acts unwisely if he puts it off at all, unless for a good reason which may turn up now and again. If one can not well attend to his penance right after leaving the confession box, he might say it the next day during the Mass at which he receives holy communion.

(Beginners follow with deep interest the guidance given them in the details of making their confession. A preliminary visit to the box itself, for inspection of its slide, etc., proves acceptable. Still further encouragement is afforded by the informa-

tion that the formal declarations, "Bless me father for I have sinned," etc., can be omitted; and that people, after stating the length of time since the last confession, have merely to tell their sins and make an act of contrition.)

#### SECTION VIII—HOLY COMMUNION

When you go to communion the priest puts something on your tongue that seems to be bread. Is it bread?

What you receive in holy communion is Our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearances of (looking like) bread; the same Christ who, being God, became man and died on the cross.

When you receive holy communion under the appearances of bread, does it taste like bread? Then is it not bread? What is it?

If what you receive should fall into water would it become soft like bread? Then is it not bread? What is it?

If it should be touched by fire would it turn brown and bend like bread? Then is it not bread? What is it?

If some bad person should put it on the ground would birds eat it like bread? Then is it not bread? What is it?

As you now see, that which you will receive at the altar looks, tastes, and acts in every way like bread. So we know it to be Christ, not by anything new or strange that we find in it, but only because Christ has declared it to be, not bread, but Himself.

Is Our Lord Jesus Christ on the altar under an appearance other than that of (looking like some-

thing besides) bread? What do we call the altar cup of gold or silver that holds what seems to be wine?

You will notice that just before giving communion to the people, the priest drinks from the chalice. Does that which he then drinks taste like wine? Then is it not wine? What is it?

Does it smell like wine? Then is it not wine? What is it?

As you now see that which the priest receives at the altar looks, tastes, and acts in every way like wine. So we know it to be Christ, not by anything new or strange that we find in it, but only because Christ has declared it to be, not wine, but Himself.

But do not imagine that what seems to be bread is the body of Christ without His blood. It is the living Christ whole and entire—His body and His blood. Neither is it to be imagined that what seems to be wine is the blood of Christ without His body. It is the living Christ whole and entire, His blood and His body.

The truth just stated prepares us for the following question. A boy at holy communion receives Our Lord under the appearance of bread alone, while the priest saying Mass receives Our Lord under the appearances of both bread and wine; now does the boy receive Our Lord just as much as the priest does?

The question you have heard is like this one: A boy is taken to the City Hall by only one horse while another person is taken to the same place by two horses. Now, when the boy has reached the City Hall by means of one horse, is he just as much there as is the person who has come by means of two horses?

When people who are not sick are going to receive holy communion, does the Church forbid them to eat or drink after the midnight before?



In this matter we may give ourselves the benefit of every doubt; but, when sure that food was swallowed after twelve o'clock, midnight, we are forbidden to receive communion on that day.

(As part of their preparation, the boys should be made ready to receive as follows:—The tongue to be extended just enough to cover the under lip; the sacred particle, should it adhere to the palate, to be gently loosened with the tongue, and to be reverentially swallowed as soon as it is sufficiently softened; no spitting to occur until the communicant is certain that the sacred particle has been swallowed in its entirety.)

When one is receiving holy communion should he try to keep his mind fully centered on what he is doing?

People gain less at the altar when they go to it thoughtlessly, just as they get less strength from common food when they take it without any hungry feeling at all. Here are three great thoughts to be kept in sight when we are receiving: Our Lord is truly present; I am not fit to receive Him; since He loves me to do so, I am glad to receive Him.

When you are at Mass and receiving communion, it is always well to recite the beads or say the morning prayers over again. Boys who can read do very well by reciting the prayers to be said before and after communion which are found in the prayer-books. Of course, when the Mass is over, it is the right thing to stay in the church a few moments to thank Our Lord for the great favor He has just done us.

We must hope that every lad in the class will

always do this; though to be sure, if one should not do it, he would not on that account be guilty of sin.

#### SECTION IX—HOLY MASS

When we receive Holy Communion Our Lord is with us under the appearances of (looking like) bread. Does this happen by the power of the priest?

The priest has the power that, when he says over bread and wine the words that Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded should be said, there is no longer bread or wine, but instead Our Lord is Himself present under the appearances of bread and wine.

The priest receives this power from the bishop.

Have the bishops been put by the apostles themselves in place of the apostles?

It follows, then, that the bishops have the same power that the apostles received from Jesus Christ.

Is it at Mass that the priest uses his wonderful power and says over the bread and wine the words by which he makes the great change?

At the beginning of Mass there is common bread on the altar. After a while the book is carried across the altar and everybody stands up. The bread still remains, for the priest has not yet said the words by which he makes the great change.

Pretty soon the priest goes to the right-hand side of the altar and is seen to pour common wine into the chalice or cup. Afterward the bell rings for

the first time and all kneel. However, the bread still remains and so does the wine; for the priest has not yet said the words by which he makes the great change.

Then follows what is called the elevation. The priest elevates, or lifts into the sight of the people, what seems to be bread, and then lifts the chalice containing what seems to be wine. Does the priest now lift bread and wine?

Just before the elevation, or lifting of what seems to be bread, the priest said over it the words by which he made the great change. So what is lifted and seems to be bread is Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread. Again, just before lifting what seems to be wine, the priest said over it the words by which he made the great change. So what is lifted and seems to be wine is Jesus Christ under the appearances of wine.

We now plainly see one of the reasons why Mass is so very sacred. It is most sacred for the reason that in it Jesus Christ, who is the God of heaven, obeys the call of the priest and, for our sakes, comes to the altar under appearances of bread and wine.

#### SECTION X—CONFIRMATION

Is there in the Church a sacrament by which we receive the Holy Ghost like the apostles received him when they were frightened and were hiding themselves after Jesus Christ had been put to death? What do we call that sacrament?

When we are confirmed the Holy Ghost makes us strong and perfect Christians. He also makes us soldiers of Jesus Christ, that is loyal to (ready

to stick to) the Church of Christ no matter what we may suffer on that account.

(Here the learners can be profitably led to consider again the picture placed before them of the work of the Holy Ghost in the apostles, by which work the apostles on receiving the Holy Ghost passed at once from the state of helpless timidity regarding Christ's cause to the state of fearless courage regarding the same cause.)

Who gives the sacrament of Confirmation?

(The boys will profit by being told how the bishop administers the sacrament: (1). He prays with hands extended over all who are to be confirmed. (2). He receives them singly at the altar and anoints on the forehead with the holy chrism saying, "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross," etc. (3). Lastly, he gives each of those confirmed a slight blow on the cheek to show that they will always have grace or heavenly help to suffer for the Faith without giving it up.)

Should the question be put, "How do the bishops come to have the power of giving us this sacrament by which we receive the Holy Ghost Himself?" we shall answer as follows: The bishops have received this power from the twelve apostles; for, as the bishops have been put by the apostles themselves in the place of the apostles, the bishops have the power that the apostles received from Jesus Christ.

#### SECTION XI—THE SACRAMENTS AS OUTWARD SIGNS

We have seen that Jesus Christ instituted (made or gave us) each sacrament to give grace or help to the soul. Is it also true that He instituted each sacrament

as an outward sign of what the sacrament itself does for the soul? The answer to this question is easily seen in what has already been taught.

The sacrament of Penance is an outward sign of what that sacrament does for the soul. It is such by the fact of openly repeating what occurs in a police court. The judge in a police court hears the person who is under charges and lets the person off with, however, some punishment. But the priest in confession does the same; he hears a person who puts himself under charges and lets the person off, with, however, some punishment which is called the "penance." Now here the sacrament of Penance is clearly an outward sign of what the sacrament itself does in giving God's grace or help which pardons sin while leaving the pardoned sinner obliged to do some punishment or penance for his sin.

The sacrament of Holy Eucharist (sacrament of holy communion) is an outward sign of what that sacrament does for the soul. It is such by the fact that in that sacrament Our Lord is openly on the altar under the appearances (looking like) bread and wine; that is, under the appearances of food and drink for the body. Now here the sacrament of Holy Eucharist is clearly an outward sign of what the sacrament itself does in feeding the soul with God's grace just as really as bread and wine feed the body.

The sacrament of Confirmation is an outward sign of what that sacrament does for the soul. It is such by the fact of openly repeating in its own way what is done with those who become soldiers and are made ready for war. When the bishop confirms, he traces the cross on one's forehead; that is, he traces there the mark of Christ's army. Besides the bishop says, "I confirm thee,"—that is, "I strengthen thee for war,"—"with the chrism of salvation." Now here the sacrament of Confirmation is clearly an outward sign of



what this sacrament does in giving God's grace or help by which we are made strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

SECTION XII—(A) CONCERNING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

**IMPURITY.** *In thought.*—There is no sin if an impure thought merely comes into one's head and the person turns from the thought as soon as he remembers that it is wrong; but there is mortal sin if the person, remembering the thought to be wrong, goes on thinking of it and gives it a welcome into his heart.

*In word.*—It is sinful for boys to place themselves in strong temptation to impurity by talking of sinful things which are of such kind that it would be sinful to do them.

*In deed.*—An impure action done through forgetfulness and by oversight is not sinful. An impure action done by a person remembering it is wrong makes him guilty of mortal sin.

**ABUSE OF THE HOLY NAME.**—A boy who speaks the wish that God may damn another is not excused from sin because the wish is spoken good naturedly and without hurting the other's feelings. Even so, the boy is guilty for the reason that he uses the holy name of God without respect.

The same is to be said of a lad who uses the holy name of God or of Our Lord Jesus Christ just to show excitement. By choosing other words, as "Gracious! Hello! Great Scott!" etc., the lad would be free to show his feelings and no harm done, but when he makes the Holy Name stand for

"Gracious! Hello! Great Scott!" etc., he uses it without respect and so commits sin.

AMUSEMENTS.—Boys are mistaken when they get the idea that simple card-playing is sinful. You may ask, "Is it a sin for a lad to have part in card-playing or in crap-shooting, etc., for pennies or nickels?" Here is the answer: Taken by itself this kind of small gambling is not sinful. All the same it becomes sinful when forbidden by the boy's parents or when it strongly tempts him to go and steal money with which to play. And even when these games are not wrong because of the parents forbidding or because of the temptation that follows, still the boy may far better amuse himself some other way. For, if one gambles on a small scale while young, he may be led, when a man, to gamble on too large a scale—this is always a sin—and so lose his soul.

#### (B) CONCERNING THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

Does the Church command us in God's name?

So over and above the duty of saying our daily prayers, we are obliged to keep the laws made by the Church, and we sin by disobeying them.

Does the Church command us to hear Mass on Sundays?

The same command holds for holy days of obligation also. We have six holy days of obligation. Christmas is one of them and New Year's day is another. When the four other holy days of obligation come around you will hear them read out from the altar.

However, when a person would have great difficulty in hearing Mass on a Sunday or on a holy

day of obligation, the Church does not command him to go. The Church also forbids, on Sundays and holy days of obligation, hard work that people can at all get out of doing.

Does the Church forbid us to play baseball, skate, swim, or have any other fun on Sundays?

As the Church does not forbid Sunday fun the same is not sinful.

Does the Church forbid the use of meat on Fridays? Why?

The same command of the Church holds for Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday and two other days that you will hear read out from the altar. However, when a person would have great difficulty in doing without meat on a Friday or on the other days, the Church does not forbid him to eat it.

How often does the Church command us to receive holy communion? At what time of the year?

But the Church would wish us to receive once a month or oftener.

#### SECTION XIII—INDULGENCES

As we have seen, purgatory is a place where souls that have sinned are punished not forever but for a time. Has the Catholic Church power to help us so that we can free our own souls, or the souls of others, from purgatory?

The Church helps us in this matter by granting us indulgences. A full, or as it is called "plenary," indulgence is one by which the soul's stay in purgatory is ended. A partial indulgence is one by which the soul's stay in purgatory is shortened, though it may not be ended.

The Church grants us indulgences for saying certain prayers or doing certain pious things which are to be found in the prayer-books.

Should the question be put to us, "How do you know that what has just been said about indulgences is true?" we must be ready to answer as follows: We know this to be the truth because it is taught by the Catholic Church; that is, it is taught by the bishops all over the world, and the bishops, having been put by the apostles themselves in the place of the apostles, have the power that the apostles received from Christ to teach His truth.

#### SECTION XIV—PRAYERS

(The Acts are usually the part of ordinary intercourse with heaven that our street-boy friend has never known and masters with most difficulty. But happily the Acts can be shortened without incongruous and disrespectful results. The following abbreviated forms may sometimes be found helpful.)

##### *Act of Faith*

O my God, I firmly believe all that Thou teachest through the Holy Catholic Church.

##### *Act of Hope*

O my God, trusting in Thy goodness and promises I hope, with Thy help, to reach heaven.

##### *Act of Love*

O my God, I love Thee with all my heart because Thou art so good.

*Act of Contrition*

O my God, I am sorry for all my sins, because they would send me to hell, and because they displease Thee, Who art so good. With Thy help I will sin no more.

(Neglected lads preparing for the sacraments are always well disposed toward small devotional objects. Accordingly they are pleased to accept rosaries, and once in possession willingly learn to make such use of the same as is had without the labor of attending to the mysteries. When better can not be done it is well, of course, to inculcate the practice of saying the beads even less perfectly; this with the hope that improvement will appear later on. The following little rule is contributed to the undertaking.)

*How to Say the Beads*

1. At the Cross say the Creed.
2. For every big bead say one "Our Father."
3. For every small bead say one "Hail Mary."
4. Every time you finish saying "Hail Marys" say one "Glory be to the Father."



## WITH BADGE PURCHASERS (CHAPS. IX AND X)

The multiple button here described is recommended as one involving little expense and very popular with boys. Its size, color, and slightly varied design are shown by the accompanying cuts; which, however, since they lack curved projection and gloss, can not by any means do full justice to the original.

### A MULTIPLE BUTTON



A



B



C

In the author's practice, the emblem (indicating higher rank accordingly as the cross becomes more conspicuous), is graded as follows: Badge A, for officers; B, for Veteran Members; C, for New Members.

Owing to their low cost, B and C can be especially recommended for first use; two varieties will suffice during the earlier period of organization.

Those who would employ these articles may be aided by the following information:

The page that bears the cuts can be used by purchasers as a description of the goods required.

The emblems are of the class known as photo or celluloid buttons. They are really **buttons**, and have no pin attachment.

Badge A ( $\frac{3}{4}$  inch diameter) differs from the others by having a screw (button) back and a bright metal rim.

Badges B and C ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch diameter) are rimless and similar in style to the ordinary campaign button.

In ordering, it may seem preferable to specify a light purple cross (with, of course, letters of the same shade), as furnishing a stronger background for the gold, rather than a blue cross. This is, however, a matter of taste.

Lettering on emblems must, of course, vary alphabetically with the names of different organizations; but, fortunately, in the class of work now considered, any desired lettering is furnished without increased charge.

As the present goods are entitled to neatness of appearance in keeping with their religious purpose, every effort should be made to have them supplied with red borders of even width all around.

Supplies can be furnished at the following prices by the publishers of this book:

Badge A, per 500 . . . . . \$50.00

Badge B and C, per 1,000 . . . . . 15.00

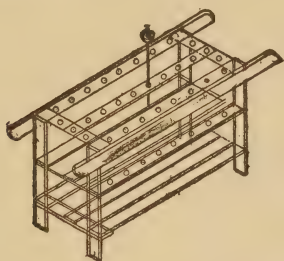
Similar emblems, but equipped with undesirable pin backs, are obtainable at cheaper rates.



## A WOODEN RACK FOR TIN TORCHES

(Chapter VII)

THE article represented by the subjoined cut will prove helpful wherever arrangements for torch-light parades may be permanently maintained. Accommodating thirty pieces, it is handy for storage



as well as for the tasks of transportation and filling with oil. The holder, made of  $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch by 3-inch material, is of the following dimensions: length, 3 feet 10 inches; width, 1 foot 8 inches; height, 2 feet 6 inches.

## A FEW SPORTS FOUND HELPFUL TO "INDOOR FUN" (Chapter XII)

### *Races*

LET a number of competitors, the more of them the better, be equipped with common oblong baking pans, a "shoe" for each foot, and they will gladly vie with one another in a sort of old folks shuffling movement. This match is well adapted to the "go as you please" plan by which laps are counted until the expiration of a given time.

A trial that is slower and less of a "dust raiser" than the preceding is inaugurated by placing flour barrels erect (both ends removed), a boy ready for action standing in each. Once the match is on, the "sprinter" is forbidden to place hands on his movable cage and consequently is obliged to kick it along awkwardly as he advances. But often this endeavor fails; the balky barrel withstands the runner's eager movements and trips him to the floor.

Stilts also can be utilized for "races," though my confidence in their safety is not such as to prevent the suggestion that the supports should elevate the walkers only a foot or less from the floor. Transit on these wooden uprights will be all the more embarrassing if their two supports have been placed at unequal heights. Besides stilt travelers can go through a "hurdle race" by jumping over a few joists an inch or two high laid here and there on the floor.

Another means of so retarding movement as to squeeze much endeavor within a narrow compass is the use of rings, twelve inches or less in diameter, made of clothesline or similar material, these encircling the ankles of the competitors and resting on their insteps. Restrained in this manner, the usually fleet Mercurys have to forego the pleasure of showing their heels to rivals and must content themselves with a slow quick step which might seem effeminate were it not for the right manly tumbles that ensue. It is worthy the remark that the cords if used for any prolonged activity can be relied upon to produce slight bruises that will not be less real because noticeable only on the following day.

A match that replaces excitement with abundant amusement is furnished by placing youngsters, indi-



vidually or in teams, on casks (not ordinary barrels) as represented in the diagram.

The travelers are then required to advance toward the goal by hand movement, dismounted con-



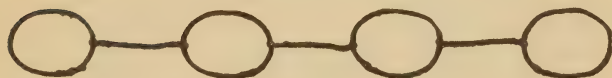
testants being obliged to return to the starting point and begin anew.

The event is at its best when two competitors are placed on each roller. Under this arrangement the mates instead of being mutually helpful are usually in each other's way; consequently they easily fall to the floor and are obliged to return again and again to the starting point. Contestants in this game can not be at all sure of victory because much in the lead and even within a few inches of the goal. Very often lads who are thus on the very threshold of success fall to the dust, yielding victory to slower but surer "dark horses," who have lumbered along in the rear, and who now cross the finish line amidst thunderous applause.

As will be explained more fully in connection with doings described further on, considerable fun can be created if boys after having taken a sitting posture are enabled to glide about the floor in defiance of the latter's efforts to retaliate in a way expensive to both clothing and personal comfort. For this reason round steel frying pans, notwithstanding their pronounced domesticity, can be advantageously turned into field protections which need not be despised even though their anatomical bearings constitute a timid departure from the armorial traditions of more heroic times. Any dealer will order a number of pans (steel) direct from the factory and without handles. The last suggestion is important; by all means see that the boys use the articles without handles.

The first use of these metals is for a "speed" contest in which the individual sitters drag themselves

literally "by dint of heels" toward the goal. This proceeding can be varied by forming the participants into rival bands. A harness to connect those of the same party consists of simple cord rings joined one with the other, as shown by the accompanying cut. These rings do not need to be secured to the wearers in any way but are merely slipped under the arms and about the breast.



Of course, there is nothing to prevent the introduction of further complications by placing some of the lads on each side back to back. When the "trains" thus formed are sent in opposite directions around the arena there is always prospect of a collision with entanglement, and a resulting potpourri of arms, legs, shouts, and derelict pans that abundantly compensates for the failure of the contest originally planned.

### *Throwing Games*

It is well to find harmless applications for the youthful propensity, so leniently contemplated by glaziers, to throw something at anything. A sim-

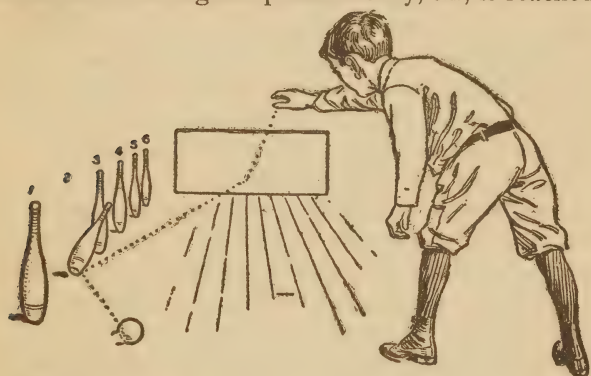
ple outlet for that form of energy is provided by a board target on which a common baseball is used. Holes, which can be of different sizes, are made in the target and the passage of the balls through these wins points higher or lower according to the sizes of the apertures.

Quoits, with variations entirely congenial to the audience, can be had by means of the gutta-percha rings and metal pin found on the market, these articles being used in conjunction with a common springboard. Each of the youngsters engaged in the pastime takes his turn at the "jumping-off" end of the plank and there endeavors to encircle the pin (placed nearby) with the rings. Meanwhile, his undertaking is antagonized by the rest of the party, for they also have place on the springboard and for the purpose of agitating the same to the utmost of their power.

The same kind of activity can be given a more elaborate objective through a species of bowling. However, instead of using the ponderous sphere that thunders along the regular alleys, we can have recourse to a baseball; while the big pins of the real game are replaced by half a dozen or so of the smallest sized Indian clubs. The latter little articles having been placed in line, junior marksmen are invited to fire upon them from "around the corner" as it were; that is, they are required to project the balls first against an upright plank or other perpendicular surface from which the balls must "carom off" in order to reach the pins.

As will be seen in the diagram, a pin is less likely

to be hit accordingly as the angle formed by itself, the perpendicular surface, and the thrower is wider; hence overturned clubs count toward victory in the ratio of that angle. These values are shown on this page by the figures 1, 2, 3, etc. The pin in the smallest angle, if "downed," counts one; the next, with its slightly larger angle, counts two; and so on until the highest possible tally, six, is reached.



But, of course, the "real thing" in throwing is had by the use of a "human target." To obtain that feature provide a large size barrel (such *e.g.*, as employed in the crockery business for the shipment of goods) or box and invite the boys to hide themselves, successively, within; each lad being under agreement to spring into full sight at the given signal so as to become for a second or two a mark for his mates. Tally must be kept of the number of times heroes are slain (any shot taking effect is considered fatal) and the youth whose charmed life has been lost the smallest number of times is declared winner.

The missiles for this kind of dueling ought to be

nothing more deadly than soft indoor baseballs. However, as they will be driven with much force, there is need of safeguarding the living target from the possibility of real injury; this can be done by having him wear the mouth and nose protector of the football field besides slipping on a padded coat. Neither is it to be imagined that the use of these buffers will banish sanguinary interest in proceedings. On the contrary, the precautions named leave in prospect so much more thumping than most able-bodied dodgers are willing to receive that means must be found of inducing the object of attack to raise his manly form to the extent necessary for business, *i.e.*, to its full height.

An arrangement that reveals cowardice and thus meets the emergency is had by a cord passing through a ring in the ceiling nearby, at the end of which cord some very light object is attached. As soon as the cask receives a new prisoner he must stand erect until the soft weight has been so adjusted as to indicate his stature. Afterward, when signaled, the jumper is required to bring the top of his head fairly up to this telltale object under pain of losing points in the game.

Appreciation of this pastime will be much heightened if its leading character be fitted out with a comic mask so as to spring in all the glory of operabouffe from his hiding place. The mask, which can be easily adjusted outside of the rubber face protector, is at its best when bearing a formidable nasal development. This feature immediately becomes the favorite point of attack and the shot by which it is utterly demolished is sure to be acclaimed the "hit of the evening."



*Miscellaneous Sports*

Boxing gloves, if admitted, will be amusingly placed on the hands of two or more combatants who have been well blindfolded. The pugilists, deprived by this circumstance of all of their bearings but remaining as lively as ever, will not fail to create very entertaining situations.

Attractive and absolutely safe "tight rope walking" can take place on a wire cable of small diameter raised not more than a foot from the floor. This metal support must be made fast at either end to the masonry or columns of the building and is afterward rendered perfectly taut by use of an expansion draw. With proper arrangements made for attaching the ends of the cable that article is in a few moments either put up and stiffened, or loosened and removed. When ready for use the metal pathway, as it is raised only a few inches, calls for no balancing pole and is strong enough to be crowded with adventurers all "trying" simultaneously. Those who are seen to keep the cable along its entire length afterward compete among themselves until somebody has demonstrated unapproachable skill.

The round steel frying pans already mentioned and a cask of good size provide for a very entertaining miniature parody on the old-fashioned game of football. The contestants, divided into opposing groups, seat themselves in the receptacles named and apply their soles to the large roller. In this way they propel the cask toward the opposite wall which serves as goal. Either party by pushing

the "football" thither despite the enemy wins a point.

The cask used for the present purpose becomes safe if merely deprived of its sharp edges. Let the extreme hoops at either end be removed. This done, the head and bottom, both of which are to be retained, must be secured in their places by sunken screws, and afterward beveled all around in such a manner that players can encounter none but rounded surfaces. Owing especially to its rough hoop attachments the cask, should it be used on flooring of quality, will have to be softened by a canvas or other covering.

While the tug-of-war in its regular form demands a long stretch of ground and then gives occupation to only five athletes on a side, it can be adapted to a small arena and a dozen or more contestants in each group by a simple change in the rope arrangements. The usual single and lengthy extension is replaced by four or six shorter ones which (by means of an iron ring at the end of each rope—these rings encircling a larger one) proceed from a single center and are able to accommodate two large squads of opposing pullers.

Indoor "tugs-of-war" will prove all the more acceptable if held on planks (which, however, may sometimes be found rather cumbersome for placing and removing with orderly rapidity) furnished with cleats so as to afford footholds. If this addition should be made, half a dozen planks, three for each side, may be provided as follows:—length as desired; thickness, one inch; width, fourteen inches. The cleats screwed on at intervals of fifteen inches,

can be one and one-half inches in both width and height.

Should there be any preference for a struggle resembling the above, but ropeless, it will follow from placing a wooden pole of suitable length and diameter in the hands of two opposing parties standing face to face in the center of the arena. The winners are declared such when, retaining the "bone of contention" despite the enemy, they have backed themselves into touch with their own wall.

Youngsters generally are given to making hand-springs on occasions and by that disposition are in readiness for a very amusing tumbling match. In preparing for this event, place a mat supporting at one of its extremities a common flour barrel. The latter should have both ends removed, thus permitting a boy to lie lengthwise through the article to steady the same and keep it in position. As will be seen, this arrangement suggests springs which a performer begins with his hands resting on the mat and finishes by projecting his body over the barrel, the feet landing on the floor.

The lads who are to take active part are now formed into rival bands, the plan being that these will compete in making the greater number of revolutions during the three or four minutes allowed each of the opposing forces in turn. When the first squad has begun, its members after tumbling once over the wooden pivot return again and again to the starting point for repeated trials, until the time is up. The second squad follows in like manner and so on.

All lads who have entered the contest must continue to take their turns until the end. This rule is necessary, for if the dropping of clumsy acrobats be permitted the game, while ceasing to be fairly conducted, may lose much of its fun. Almost every group after making a few laps develops an awkward "Fatty" Somebody or Other whose winded rotundity becomes stranded on the barrel; and the event, which delights all save the victim and his obstructed associates is one not to be missed.

There is considerable probability that the tumbling match will fail of reaching its intended finish. Occasionally the barrel, unfitted for the rough treatment received, yields to some substantial straw heavy enough to break the camel's back into pieces. This occurrence, however, merely changes the tone of the diversion without destroying its interest; for there is no end of merriment when the living ballast that had been reposing in apparent security within the wooden cylinder must be helped out of a sudden crush of hoops and staves.

Indoor baseball, at present enjoyed only in armories and the larger gymnasiums, can be accommodated on a small floor without any change in the ball itself but with the introduction of cord rings on the insteps (described above), together with the employment of a bat some fourteen inches long and of broomstick thickness. The cords, by obliging a player to take steps only a foot in length, make an inter-base stretch of three or four yards the real equivalent of the far longer inter-base distance of the regular field. However, legislation must be enforced against jumping, otherwise those concerned

will have recourse to grasshopper methods of nullifying their handicap.

Meanwhile our slender, cut-off bat used on an ordinary soft indoor baseball renders every real hit a correspondingly great achievement. Take note that clubs of small diameter will be quickly broken unless made of strong material. Moreover, they should be equipped with the customary enlarged handle without which slips may occur to the injury of bystanders.

Bases can be made of pieces of the heaviest corrugated rubber matting. These articles laid rough side down will keep their places for the purpose of the present game as well as if glued. All slides are of course prohibited, for the base that the hampered "runner" must reach afoot with great difficulty, if at all, is ever within touching distance, should he be let measure his length along the floor.

While a limited arena may reduce the number of players, the game nevertheless retains under the foregoing restrictions enough of its original merits to please not only those engaged but also their companions. As the miniature sport occurs in its entirety close at hand, the onlookers are quite as much favored as those of the ordinary game who, by some wondrous means of locomotion, were able to accompany the ball bodily every inch of its flight. Accordingly, whenever there may be need, the audience can be kept for quite a length of time well occupied watching "baggers" run without any bags and "sky scrapers" fielded without any sky.

The last of these suggestions concerns a conflict resembling the barnyard unpleasantness enough



that the boys will generally call it the "rooster fight." The preliminaries are had by seating a couple of spirited chaps on the floor to be pinioned according to the subjoined illustration. The feet are tied together as also the wrists, and meanwhile a short stick is placed between the arms and knees. As will at once be seen, a youth whose limbs are secured in this manner is easily rolled over by any little opposing force that may be brought to bear on him.

This observation explains the nature of the combat. Two fighters, shackled according to directions but making the best of their limited activities, strive to overturn each other. Neither is accounted



to have fallen unless completely down, that is with one or both shoulder blades touching the boards; but for every time one of the combatants is thus indisputably floored, his opponent scores a point. Victory, of course, comes to the party inflicting the greater number of falls.

In attempting to thus down the enemy the duel-

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ists, like their prototypes of the domestic roost, must rely chiefly on the use of their pedal extremities. A strategist having succeeded in working his feet ever so little under those of the enemy can, by a slight tip, lay the latter low and so to speak "wipe the floor with him." But other methods of attack carry the day. Even pokes with the head sometimes play a part in the battle, and when suffered by a combatant who is partially out of balance easily cause him to bite the dust.

This game becomes exceedingly amusing by the realistic "deaths" of the performers. "Keeled over," they are as helpless and motionless as birds with necks twisted yesterday. Very often, after giving each other mortal pushes, both combatants become suddenly "lifeless." And then there is high sport in observing the changes that suddenly turn the tide of victory. "Rooster fights," more than most games, illustrate the adage "while there is life, there is hope." Very often a much disabled fighter lying on his side and almost completely toppled over manages by a last and despairing move to send the enemy rolling into the "Valley of Death."





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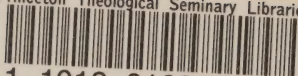
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